

Letters from Benjamin Stephen Hobson

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On board "The City of Carlisle" 1

October 12th 1858.

My dear Parents,

The Captain has just told us that if we like to post any letters at the Cape, where ~~and~~ we are going to land on account of our supply of water failing us, they will reach China before we do ~~as~~ ~~as~~ as they go by steamer.

I am extremely comfortable, our passengers generally, are agreeable and pleasant, and at present we are all elated at the prospect of touching "terra firma" once more; this is a very fine fast-sailing ship with an experienced and pleasant captain and officers. This will be a long passage

Yours affectionately
J. L. 24th 1858
Stephen

as already we have been a longer
time than usual and the worst part
is yet to come. I think you may ex-
pect me either at the end of De-
cember or the beginning of January.

I am very anxiously looking
forward to meeting you again and
you may be sure that calms or any-
thing likely to detain us on our
way, are everything but agreeable.

Sometimes of a moonlight evening
with the breeze playing in my face
I think of you all and long to be
with you or else my thoughts revert
to England where my kind grand-
mamma and aunts are and all other
nice friends. - I have as you wished

my dear father brought out all my
books but ~~at present~~ ^{as taken} I until now I
have been, with all the novelties con-
nected with a sea voyage that I ~~was~~
have not applied to them so much as I
wished to do, however I hope that hitherto
nothing shall attract ^{me} from the course
I you wish me to pursue. — I
have a nice long letter to my grand-
mamma and uncles with all the
minute details of this passage, as they
wished me to do and, I am glad to
say, I have not forgotten to thank
them most warmly and sincerely for all
their very ^{great} kindnesses to me since I have
lived with them and I am sure it
would be black ingratitude were I not

to have done so. - The You will
be glad to hear that the Doctor and
I keep very good friends, exchanging
books and accommodating each other
in various little ~~and~~ ways. His cabin
is next to mine and we had both
filled up by the same man. - I am
very fond of my cabin and am writing
this letter in it now by the light of
my ~~extra~~ lamp; it is cosy and very
comfortable - and every thing that I
could wish. - But I must now
conclude with fondest love to all
and elated with the prospect of soon
meeting you,

I remain

Your loving Son
Benⁿ J. Hopson.

2

11 St John's Terrace, L'don
18th October 1861.

My dear Father,

I enclose a copy of the letter I wrote to Mr Graham this morning which I hope will give you satisfaction. - I am sorry that this letter will not reach you till 2 P.M. tomorrow, but I fully intended ~~doing~~ writing you this afternoon. At 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ I posted the letter to Mr G. in Oxford Street & then visited an old schoolmate of mine close by: after that I called on my friend Macgowan's relatives: thence I proceeded to Cousin John Marshall's whom I saw together with his excellent wife, who gave me some dinner; I then went out at 4 to

Mr Kilsby Jones with Cousin John
after a long chat returned at 5 to
take tea with them. Mr Jones is very
little altered: his beard & moustache
are all but white but the same in
life & vivacity as ever. He desires his
kindest remembrances to you all.

Cousin John's practice is ~~to~~ not remun-
erative consisting of poor patients tho'
~~there~~ are not few of them. He did not
at all recognize me at first, and his
wife says I am just like her brother
Bryan now in Melbourne. —

— I am very sorry you ~~should~~
~~have had~~ ^{took} the trouble of going to
Birmingham & particularly so since
it was fruitless. I think I am well
out of it, and can hardly doubt that
I have taken a wise step in declining
Mr Graham's offer partnership; many
thanks to you both for the interest you

have shewn & the active part you have taken in the whole affair. Please remember the references you have been put to that I may know what to add to my many other ~~etc~~ debts due you. - I must now close (9.30^{P.M.}). This letter will have to be posted before 7.30 tomorrow morning that it may reach you by the 2 o'clock post.

Your affectionate Son
A. L. Hobson.

To Grandfather
from
Uncle

3

Union Steam Ship Coy's
Steamer "Cambrian"

Off Portland Lights 5/5/12.

Dear Mr. Father,

Monday Evening. 8.30. - I am
glad to say everything has prospered
with me so far; I am in a nice little
steamer with very fair accommodation
a good table, and at present not a
disagreeable lot of passengers. My
Cabin Mate - Mr. Salmon - is a
young man, worldly & light-minded
if not worse, but pleasant & chatty.
He took very well a remark I made
about the expression "devil" "dence"
which he makes use of, but I fear
he will ridicule my devotions to-
night. - I have felt decidedly
queer & lonely since we started, and
have had a longing to look upon

some friend's face; however it will, I trust, draw me nearer to Christ, to enjoy his companionship & his unchangeable love.

Plymouth Harbour. Tuesday morning 9.30. - I have just finished breakfast. Every ~~or~~ soon will go ashore to post this note, ^{as well} as to leave the ship. We do not start till 4 I believe this afternoon. - Mr Zoomer & his sisters were exceedingly kind to me, ^{the former} buying me all sorts of things, such as chess board with holes, newspapers, books for the passage, life preserver, carriage hire, mending my shoes &c. I told him I hoped to free myself from his debt some day. I take out for the Zoomers a box & several small parcels, the owners of which will be glad to entertain me at Cape Town. My lines have indeed fallen in pleasant places, but I much need grace & strength & wisdom to act as a Christian & to feel no shame in avowing myself as such. - Mr Salmon is I think impressive & confesses his sorrow in not having saved the money spent in many frivolities; may it deepen into something more worthy. - ^{if} Please thank Grandmother & Aunt for their letter which however I have not ^{yet} read.

With warmest to you all. I remain

Your most affectionate son

Ed. Hobson.

I have this (parcel) in a stationers shop in Plymouth.
I see Pauline Hunter that two sisters have arrived at Hongkong.

Stephen
May 5th
1862

At Sea -
Off Portland
Lights

To Grandfather
from
1/2 Uncle

No 44. Clarendon Saw Mill, New Side Post, N. Maritzburg, Natal;
27th October 1862.

Dear Lizzie,

20th Oct: I am afraid the long letter you wrote me from Watlingford when you were staying at Miss Stevens must have gone astray, for it has not come by last mail, and I should so much have liked to have heard of your enjoyment there; however I must return good for evil, and send you many long letters. - Dear Lizzie: excuse my joking; I don't know whether you wrote me or not, but I do know that I should very much have enjoyed receiving a nice long letter. Remember this, country is not the same as Africa where there were two mails a month: here there are only one in that time, and therefore only twelve in a year! - I am glad too that all my missing letters have now come to hand, and next mail (they are at work) will bring me your letter acknowledging the receipt of mine, wherein my safe arrival in Natal is announced.

Since last mail left I have been pursuing the even tenor of my way as usual with nothing to mention in this my letter to you, except that I have experienced a growth of grace & increase of spiritual happiness for which I am very thankful. I feel now such a trust in God as if nothing could shake it or disturb my confidence & reliance in Him: this produces much happiness which would be more apparent and less varying but for the spiritual warfare that I have to wage, self-reproaches for some unwary speech, inconsistent deed or trifling state of mind, and bodily ailments & irritations. - Do you remember how that at the battle selected in Edinburgh as our favorite one, and which was the first I wrote in that little chapbook my Father gave me which I have had in constant use; it is "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not on thine understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." I think I can say I have done this in nearly everything; both important & trivial, spiritual & temporal, since I have been in this colony, and the result is I can on retrospection see His hand guiding me, His arm upholding His spirit sanctifying me. - I am so struck with the view of His Providence providing me with a pleasant home & congenial occupation so soon (just a month) after my removal in a strange land, so delighted with the Christian & profitable friendship I have formed with Mr & Mrs Allison who take such a deep interest in me.

2nd Nov. - I must have made much better use of my time, as I have just before I closed my last letter to you. I did not tell you how so I thought you might be impatient till the next mail arrived. I hope it will leave you more satisfied; do you observe any change? Mr. Harkins thinks I should be some doctor, but I cannot add much difference. In regard to the question of the dark, but by next mail I will send you another dark-do-ink, much lighter & more of the face to be seen, which was to be as bright as the next with an eighth of a grain of soda, but Mr. Harkins was so pleased with the impression printed off it that he should have done it too. I could think it too precious but this I cannot understand - however you will be able to judge for yourself if it arrived safely, the fear of which prevents me sending too many. Mr. Harkins took the greatest pleasure ever - very different from Mr. Harkins and I thought it was a dark-do-ink for 14/- Mr. Harkins was also taken and he had 10 per cent. I think you will find that you may form some idea of what a 13 year old man is with the present in the dark do-ink or ordinary brown of course. -

[illegible]

interest^{in me}, and so astonished at the growth of my spiritual life when I consider how destitute I have been of the means of grace - Divine service being held only once a fortnight in Chaffin's Chapel, which is in the morning, & once a month in this room - and with only one Christian friend in the vicinity, who is Mr Milward, our pastor.

I ^{un-sent} called my last letter in town if I remember right on the Saturday night, and I posted it on the following Sabbath morning; after which I went to Mr Allison's, and had a most delightful & profitable conversation with him on several religious topics regarding which I was in perplexity & doubt. At 11 I went to Mr Alencow's chapel (Wesleyan) but my anticipated enjoyment was not realized for a ~~bad~~ ^{strong} wind was blowing which made me drowsy: I dined with Mr & Mrs B. and took a small class at the Kaffir Sunday School of 5 children, after which I went to Mr Allison's chapel which is behind his house, and preached to his congregation of Kaffirs (about 80 were present), Mr A. interpreting. I much appreciated the privilege and asked earnestly the Divine blessing on this my first attempt of preaching to the heathen.

I was to have gone with Mrs Kieck (Mr Spearman's sister) to hear Mr Trubb, an Episcopalian, preach, but the Church was closed, and in the evening attended Mr Reynolds at the close of which I partook of the communion at Mr Alencow's chapel which I did not enjoy so much as I looked forward to. I then called on the Reynolds and after a pleasant conversation engaged in family worship, which I much enjoyed: so you see I had indeed a feast of good things that day. The next morning at 11 started homeward & reached our journey's end a little before six o'clock, pleased & surprised. - Mr Allison's salary (£180) is derived from the rent of a flour mill which he constructed with the help of his Kaffir converts at Eden Dale, which he likewise founded. But of this he supports himself, builds, and contributes to an annuity of an aged mother & sister who live in the Old Colony near Cape Town. He wants ^{now} to double the size of his school-room which is the Chapel, do well, but he will not ask the money for it, so I handed him two £5 bank notes, which were the first he had received: could you not obtain some money for him & forward it to me by bill? - Mr & Mrs Allison are the holiest people I think that I have ever met with, & am thankful that I have been brought to know them.

[illegible]

With fondest Love I remain

Fourteen at each end of the

Ed. H. H. H.

27 October '62

5
No. 5 Clarendon Saw Mill, Woodside Post, St. Maritzburg, Natal,
24th October 1862.

Dear Mother,

11th October, Saturday Afternoon. — Your long & delightful letter of 4th August I at last received this morning whilst at breakfast, and if you could conceive the pleasure & enjoyment I experienced from reading it, would amply be rewarded for its length. I accordingly commenced to reply to it whilst the impressions remain fresh upon me. — I am glad you have heard of my arrival at the Cape and I trust all my subsequent letters will likewise safely reach you. I am delighted to hear what Miss Stevens says of Elsie, and doubt not she will enjoy her visit, but am at a loss to comprehend how the acquaintance sprang up which suggested the invitation: I presume it is the Miss Myra Stevens that was once Aunt Harriet's musical teacher and of whom I have heard so much but never seen. — I am sorry your day of pleasure at Zeddington should have been so damped by bodily ailments, which arose from immediate circumstances. Mr. Hobson's death took me much by surprise; he was an earnest-minded man & much grieved at the want of worldliness of the community, as well as at the ^{apparent} fruitlessness of his labours. Please give me all the news you can when you write, especially if from Chinaman which I have still a great interest in though I have never yet regretted my leaving it. — Your remarks about the missionary spirit were very sweet & consolatory; I feel myself only an instrument but most precious in the means of obtaining the divine power & assistance I so much desire to ^{aid} make me in adorning the glorious doctrine of Christ. —

This is my holiday, so this morning I caught my horses and rode over to Albion which is about 1 1/2 mile from here; as it was a lovely morning with the sun shining brightly & a slight breeze to agitate the atmosphere I much enjoyed myself. I then went to a place about a mile distant where a man (a sailor) once resided & was named, along George, but who was driven away by the fire consuming the house, he lived in that did so much damage to Albion. It was a pretty spot so close to the forest (or Bushygo it is termed here) and with scores of peach, apple & pear trees not nearly all destroyed together, some dozen or so lofty poplar-like Blue Gums — and

20th October - We have had 24 hours of steady quiet rain at which we are all rejoiced, for it will make the grass jump, and the crops lately down spring up rapidly. This morning is our opening or rather the end of it, and pleasing is the prospect from the present green carpet which spreads over like a flat (ie plain) as far as the eye can reach to the former black burnt surfaces nearly everywhere visible. The parallel earth is drinking in this rain with avidity, and we must not forget to thank Providence for the rich blessing. This is the first day's rain (it has rained in the night before) I have seen in the colony and very changed it appears after 3 months of drought during days that we have had; however now the sun's beams contain some heat in them which is rather unpleasant especially when accompanied with a hot wind, which passes everything before it, the moisture in the atmosphere. I am very pleased of our not being in town before now to the south of it, near the coast where Mr. Mack. Clark would have been on a visit to the Bay - describes it as very hot & disagreeable, and the contrast between this locality & Mauritius though only 30 miles apart is very great, but the steep ascent & superior elevation must be remembered. -

I am sorry to say there is a prospect of our losing our pastor - Mr. Mulmond - but we shall know in a short time the results of the Wesleyan conference that is going on now at Burlington and know what he pleased. Mr. M. is much esteemed by all for his liberality of manners, true charity of heart, and devotedness to his Christian assignments. I regret he is going for one fortnight from his kind spirit, and with warm wishes that some pleasant communications - one in particular must come, when we shall be enabled to learn my experiences that we are some of his former disciples. Another since, on Saturday afternoon, he left - saddled for an hour when on his way to the house. Peter might come 10 miles from here where he was going to preach his next day, and the few words I had with him together ^{and} his presence were like a refreshing breeze wafting comfort to the thirsty ground. I sincerely wish he had come a week for - encourage himself, for fellow and I almost wonder his spirit might

I had a fresh view of the whole Kar Kloor ^{range}, which struck me much with its exquisite beauty: how I did wish that I could have had you by me to enjoy it, and that I was able to describe it which is impossible.

18th Oct. - Saturday has come round again, and I am sorry that I have not written this now. - My visit to Lumb was enjoyable in the extreme, and I am glad to say profitable as well, for I had some sweet heart-communings with Mr & Mrs Allison, and have returned to Clarendon refreshed & filled with fresh ardour & renewed hope & trust. Mr & Mrs Allison have been in South Africa 42 years and have never been to England during that period: they once laboured among a very warlike tribe for 16 years (without once I believe seeing a white face) with great success, and Mr A. told me with much delight of the high spiritual ^{it} some of those wild people had attained to, and some glorious & happy death-beds she had witnessed. She had been exceedingly ill before I came & was then still weak, & talk to me, which she had a very great desire to do, but was able to do latterly. Her heart yearns toward those who love the Lord Jesus, and also to those who doubt that they save their precious souls. - I had a long heart-searching conversation with Mr Walter ^{the other} last night (we were by ourselves) on the all-important matter, and I do believe I hope he was affected by it: how earnestly I have asked God that I may be the honored instrument of his conversion. He openly states that he is not converted, from what he hears, that is ~~an~~ a peculiar kind of feeling coming over a man, and rests his trust partly on the mercy of God & partly because he is as good if not better than very many professing Christians. He is not so steady yesterday as I hoped he would have been, but I hope some other occasions may impress these things on his mind. You see that though not in name, I can be a missionary (as my Father) in spirit, and I hope to speak to all the people at Clarendon & Albion on what concerns them so much.

They are now talking of commencing the school-house or rather as soon as the mills commence working, and they are dependent on the rains which are extremely late this year. The site is going to be changed to Clarendon because a family is going a little further off that lives here & they wish it to be half-way between their residence & Albion. I think it will be close to the forest, where there is a nice stream of water I am glad to say.

No 416 Clarendon, Woodside, Maritzburg, Natal; 6
1st December 1862.

Dear Little,

15th Nov. Your letter of the 4th Sept. has come safely to hand with many thanks. - You had returned home after a vacation of eight weeks which had very been enjoyable, but you did not extend your excursions to Yorkshire or Durham. I am glad dear Mother has started this Young Females Auxiliary Socy, and that the commencing meeting was auspicious. Was Miss Eaton Dupré there or Miss Maggie's sisters or Miss Kest? Miss Brown of course was present, and Miss B. (the retired E. I. Coy physician). - It was some- what pleasing receiving these Mother names, for I am shut out of the world here and lead so monotonous a life without variation except of the most trifling kind that I don't wonder now that I once suffered from home-sickness & an undefinable sense of loneliness: however, I am glad to say I am much freed from all that now, though the desire of returning home is oftentimes very strong within me. I have not entirely adapted Natal as my own land yet, and may even henceforth left leave it as I have left China; but I have so entirely commended my way unto God for guidance, that I experience no anxiety on the subject he shall wait till events are made to happen by which I shall be directed. However on the subject of loneliness, I am far better off than many farmers, who experience a perfect isolation, except when they seek the reverse, in town or with their neighbours: but they are now 4 families within a stone's throw of this house & 2 more at Albion. Mr Trotter lives only a mile & a half away, but I have not called for weeks as I have no enjoyment in doing so. - My horse unfortunately is such a brat that I should ride over very frequently on the Saturday to Mr Methley's - where Mr Milward stays - which is 10 miles to Shapton Chapel 7 or 8 miles from here. I did so one time and was the means of doing Mr Milward some good as he was suffering from fever at the time which considerably abated after I had been there an hour or so. - I have not attended Divine Service of any kind for 4 Sabbaths, being prevented by a sore.

afford to do so next-days. - But really should like to go home, for I do so miss your sincere, gentle & kindly sympathy together with your loving encouragement when I had perhaps wrapped myself by unjustifiable reproaches; all which I set back upon now with every regret, as I view the pleasant & delightful times we had together. Have you yet come to rejoice in Christ as your precious Saviour? Life is not worth having (in my estimation) without Christ to live upon daily as a deliverer from all its troubles & from all evil propensities; as an example, for imitation, to exanimate the spirit upon, and as a God to adore. Does this now strengthen Christ?

29th Nov: Sunday afternoon. - I am now looking forward to the Christmas holidays, which I intend to give, but how long they shall be I have not yet decided, most probably 3 weeks, to return on about the 15th Dec: - I only look forward to these holidays as something to dwell upon, for I have generally found satisfaction in being with my friends the Allens, the Reynolds (the Congregationalist) and the Dricks (the Quakers, unmarried sisters) whose daughters, Mary and 13, I say beautifully as the piano, and music is the great attraction. I don't know whether you have Christmas Day in town, where I should be able to go to chapel, most, but I certainly shall not go to the Day as I have indicated through I have an invitation from the Americans. - I am very glad to say we have moved into a new schoolroom rendered vacant by a neighbor leaving for another part of the town: it is only half a dozen yards farther, and is much more commodious than the former one. I have not so many scholars now - 12 instead of 15 - as I had, which I am glad of though it reduces my income by £6: however 3 more are coming next half, from the family of a near-neighbor called Hoggate. There are 7 Maes (Dun, Charles, Emily, the school who has 2 1/2 of one family, and William, Master John Eiken, & Eliza & the other brother's family) & Stephens - 4; August, Hugo, and a young 1/2 of a woman: lastly Thomas Butterfield nephew of the first named. They have all got on exceedingly well, especially in geography

No 411⁶ Clarendon, Woodside, Maritzburg, Natal; 6
1st December 1862.

Dear Sister,

15th Nov. Your letter of the 4th Sept. has come safely to hand with many thanks. - You had returned home after a vacation of eight weeks which had very been enjoyable, but you did not extend your excursions to Yorkshire or Durham. I am glad dear Mother has started this Young Females Auxiliary Socy, and that the commencing meeting was auspicious. Was Miss Fanny Duple there or Miss Maggie's sisters or Miss Rust? Miss Brown of course was invited, and Miss Bond (the retired E. I. Coy physician). - I have some-what pleasing reviving these latter names, for I am shut out of the world here and lead so monotonous a life without variation except of the most trifling kind that I don't wonder now that I once suffered from home sickness & an undefinable sense of loneliness: however I am glad to say I am much freed from all that now, though the desire of returning home is oftentimes very strong within me. I have not entirely adopted Natal as my own land yet, and may even henceforth left leave it as I have left China; but I have so entirely commended my way unto God for guidance, that I experience no anxiety on the subject & shall wait till events are made to happen by which I shall be directed. However on the subject of loneliness, I am far better off than many farmers, who experience a perfect isolation, except when they seek the reverse, in town or with their neighbours: but they are now 4 families within a stone's throw of this house & 2 more at Albion. Mr Trotter lives only a mile & a half away, but I have not called for weeks as I have no enjoyment in doing so. - My horse unfortunately is such a bruiser that I should ride over very frequently on the Saturday to Mr Methley's - where Mr Milward stays - which is 8 miles to Chaffton Chapel for 8 miles from here. I did so one time and was the means of doing Mr Milward some good as he was suffering from fever at the time which considerably abated after I had been there an hour or so. - I have not attended Divine Service of any kind for 4 Sabbaths, being prevented by a sore.

No 7.

Woodside Post, Maritzburg, Natal;
29th December 1862.

7

Dear Sister,

Christmas Day 1862. - Last Xmas day I was with you at home, and quietly & my recollection did we spend the day; this year I have spent it still quieter in the country on a farm 15 miles from Town with no human buildings in sight but with some delightful Christian people named the Brookes whose guest I have been for 5 days. Mrs B. I much enjoy & admire; she is so cheerful & lively, and uniting a practical living Christianity with it as well. They seem as easily disposed to turn the conversation on to religious topics (which have much engrossed us) as on worldly ones. Mr Adams (a young man of 22) is a partner and lives with them as their son; he became converted during his connexion with them. And now you will like to know how I have spent this memorable day - I spent last night with a neighbour named Lindsay whom married Mr Allison's adopted daughter, and returned here about 9 1/2 this morning. As I reproached myself for having indulged in worldly conversation when with the Lindsays, I told Mrs Brookes so and we had a pleasant conversation together as she was working in household matters by which I was encouraged & my soul refreshed. I then scraped the potatoes for Mrs B. & otherwise helped her and then wrote a little to my dear Parents. We had dinner at 2 o'clock which consisted of Roast Beef (bought in Town), some Kidney beans & potatoes, concluding with a nice Plum pudding and a baked Rice pudding for me as I don't take P.P. from a promise I made a little time ago. We had two ^{that} guests, making a party of eight. After ~~day~~ reading in the verandah was the order of the day, for it has been hot & sultry, say 85° in the shade, and then as the sun went down I had a bath with the little boy; for tea we had bread & butter & cake, and tea finished we all sat in the verandah enjoying the cool of the evening and sang beautiful hymns for some time which was very enjoyable. Mr & Mrs B. bear ardent love to all those who love the Lord Jesus, and as such have extended their welcome to me; we have accordingly had much heavenly communion together. I shall retire to bed directly as it is late, and tomorrow morning about 6 o'clock I intend to return home after an absence of 8 days: unfortunately my enjoyment has been much curtailed by my horse playing the truant, and I expect trotting home. He was twice haltered which prevents horses going very far astray.

but it does not prove very effectual in his case. —

27th Dec: — I came home yesterday on Mr Adams' horse and had a scorching hot ride. I started at 6 1/2 o'clock to have as much of the cool of the day as possible but did not reach here till 12 1/2: I ~~off~~ saddled however for an hour at Howick to give my horse a good feed of forage and where I ought to have breakfasted, so that I was almost exhausted when my ~~my~~ journey was finished as I had taken only two small pieces of bread & butter and a cup of milk before starting. — Before arriving at Mr Crookes', I had made a stay of two days in Town where I spent of course most of my time with Mr & Mrs Allison, and one evening with Mrs Bisick which I generally enjoy as her daughters always give me superb music on the piano. I am given to understand that Mr B. would like me for his son-in-law, and there is another young lady living there who has taken a fancy to me but Mrs Allison ~~ought~~ found it out & crushed it out, for she is a foolish girl. I escorted her one Sunday evening to chapel & on our return spoke to her about the ~~the~~ enjoyments of being a Christian; she has since tried to become a member.

28th Dec: Sunday Evening. — To my great disappointment, it has ^{been} a thoroughly wet day and I have had to stop at home. If it had been only drizzling drizzle, Mr Walter and myself would certainly have started, but it has poured especially in the morning. If tomorrow is fine, I shall ride over to Chaffow on one of Mr Shaw's horses to see the friends at Chaffow, particularly Mr Milward. —

I have been reading today Boardman's "Higher Christian Life" to my great enjoyment: I borrowed it of Mr Crookes. — Our food today has been abundant & satisfying viz: for the three meals, cold pork, and cold baked rice pudding which will appear for the sixth time tomorrow morning at breakfast & then finished, white beans & sweet potatoes — the two latter at only dinner & tea, and cold at tea, with bread & butter of course. — I don't think I ever saw cold beans or cold potatoes come on to the table in England, but here we are not so much governed by usage.

68

10

ee: I met her class and with four boys remain

1

100

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Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through from the reverse side. The text appears to be a letter or a journal entry, with several lines of cursive script.

for Lessee

29th December
1862

8
Woodside Dock, Maritzburg, Natal;

29th December 1862.

My dear Grandmother,

6th Dec: Aunt Eliza's and Aunt Aramiah's letters of 3rd ^{14th} October came duly to hand ^{14th} 4th days ago, and I was glad to learn you were all happy & well; also that you were looking forward to the pleasure of being in Chesterham again after an absence of 4 months. You seemed to have enjoyed the quiet of Ipswich very much. I would have liked to have remained there shut out almost from all human intercourse, had there not been the conviction that we must live for others as well as ^{our} own preferences. —

Aunt Eliza thinks I was precipitate in forming the intention of buying that land on the Springfield Estate on which Mr. Spearman resides, but my Aunt must remember there are times when a quick determination has to be made even in such a position as mine was; and if I had come to the conclusion & decision of settling at the Bay, how mortified I might have been after the Auction that I had let such an opportunity slip through my fingers. The land afterwards went for £10. 2. 6 per acre & later at another sale at £15 — per acre ^{for another lot} a very high price considering its distance from town (6 miles) but this shows on the other hand how highly it was prized. I saw the capabilities of the land, and moreover ^{had} the advice of Mr. Spearman & other persons I heard their opinions, but above all I sought the Divine guidance & directions in forming my plans. I did this constantly afterwards, and when at Maritzburg I was perfectly bewildered with undecidedness, it came the answer to my prayers at last after my ramblings in being brought here to a com-

forable home. I have grown in spirituality and heavenly wisdom since I arrived in Natal, and for this alone all my expenses & troubles have been cheerfully incurred & endured. I never understood the preciousness of Christ to the believer; I now perceive that He can be precious & partly experience Him so. I now see more of my spiritual ignorance & lackings, and also my blindness, but I am cheered by the thought that my prayers & strivings after holiness will be gradually rewarded: I say gradually because when I look back upon my past "new life", I cannot say, "now I was a Christian and then I was not", for the Spirit's work within me has been slow & gradual, that I cannot fix on the dates of my conversion, neither is it till lately that I have rejoiced in the assurance that I am a "Son of God" (I John 3.1) and a joint-heir with Christ. — I so much wish I was older, and ardently wish desire to be 30 years of age, for then I shall be holier, shall possess more of the mind of Christ, be nearer heaven, and be altogether more experienced in temporal as well as spiritual matters. I shall be more prudent, more sagacious, more watchful & more charitable. I like ~~then~~ to see the time fly past, and the months roll past by for this end, and as a proof that my pilgrimage will soon be over. — Moreover, I may say I like to behold God in His Providence: I don't believe in "trifles", I don't believe in the "laws of nature", in "instinct", but am persuaded that God is now as much putting forth His sustaining as He did ages ago His creating hand. It is God that leads the new-born lamb where to find its mother's milk when it has only been in the world a few minutes as I have often watched them when in Yorkshire, not instinct. For the same reason our little troubles, and ill tempers & pec-

experiences are for some purposes; what purposes? that we may see to and apply
to help sympathy in Christ as our constant hourly believers & favourers, and
these experiences this fulness ^{will} as fitted for our little troubles as our sore afflictions.
This way we shall have nearer to Christ, and we have peace & joy for us. This
experience there is fulfillment of joy and a true right hand there are pleasures in

27th Dec: - You will learn from how actual a pleasure with I have made
to some Christian friends within that I am really agree much of. I much
now conclude and remain with best love to you all,
Your ever affectionate friend,
A. M. Mason.

Let's come needs a letter to Aunt Maudie but I have not time. All
affectionate.

Stephen, David

Dec. 29. '62

James Grant

Recd March 1

63

See in above paper.

No 10.

Woodside Post, Maritzburg, Natal;

9

Father,
My dear Mother,

2nd January. - As the "Evening" with the

English mail is later than usual I am enabled to send you a few more lines, and I shall perhaps answer your letters before I close this. -

This is your birthday, and of course I did not forget you in my prayers at the throne of grace. I prayed that you might have increased holiness, and that you might experience greater love to Him who has done so much for you which would produce renewed devotion to God & to our fellow creatures both for their spiritual and temporal goods. These have been partly my own prayers yesterday as the commencement of a new year together with the desire that I may live closer & more united daily to Jesus as my Saviour, Shepherd & bosom Friend, but above all as my God & portion for ever. This living faith will produce conformity to His ^{image} ~~character~~ similarity to His character as well as being the means of obtaining all that sanctification for holiness, that strength for struggling against sin, and that guidance for every trouble & perplexity that I so much need & desire: thus shall I experience Christ more & more precious to me. - Excuse me giving you these thoughts, but they are now occupying more of my attention I am glad to say, and it is refreshing to express my feelings. -

I hope you will experience less anxiety (hard tho' it be) with regards to your temporal concerns this year. "The Lord will provide." Remember His many promises, which can never fail: and if He is so benevolent to those who are in a state of rebellion against Him, what must His love be to those who glorify Him.

5/1. - The mail is still outside, and I am afraid I shall not be able to answer your letters, which I had hoped to have done.

This (Monday) was the day I intended to have commenced school, but it is wet and I wish all the scholars to be assembled together at first as well as to receive the prizes which I have purchased, viz: 4 little books. I have moreover had another ~~to~~ accident to one of my feet the same as before, and that is I ran a small piece of stick right through my foot day before yesterday; it was nearly 2 inches long, and all but a short portion (enough to lay hold of) was embedded; the skin on the other side however was not broken. I have put on a bread poultice to reduce the inflammation and shall put on another one today most likely of fresh cow dung. -

I spent my New Years day at Singleton, where Mr William Shaw lives which is 8 miles from here below to Shafton. Mr Walter went with me. The invitation was to dinner and we started a little after 11. I was mounted on Robin, Mr Lee's horse. When we came to the drift (ford) of the Kaar Kloof, we were afraid whether we might be drowned if we attempted to cross the river; accordingly we took off our clothes, which we rolled up & tucked under our arm, and rode across naked. Mr Walter being a swimmer went first and finding it practicable, I followed. The water nearly came up to the top of the horses' backs, and if it had been 6 inches deeper, the horses would have had to swim, which would have been dangerous ^{from} the certainty of being carried down by the strong stream. - There were in all six persons at dinner which consisted of boiled mutton (which I have not tasted six times in the Colony) new potatoes & kidney beans, plum pudding & tart. The afternoon was spent in playing & singing music, and at 5 we started homewards: when we came to the drift we rode through it without stopping and found it had gone down. We wetted our legs a little. The day was a bright sunny one but not sultry as Christmas Day was but in the afternoon there were two or three thunder storms concluding with a heavy mist in the evening.

My check of horses now consists of ~~20~~ head, namely ~~20~~ horses, and ~~7~~ foals consisting of yearlings mostly, 2 year 13 year olds, the latter being called heacates. All this cost me \$234. ^{2.} 0, mostly paid for in bills. I shall return my bank balance (\$9 off) and the \$200 I expect to receive that will help today for the new ones. I intend purchasing by the sale of a milk & a cow for something like \$740. -

I send you herewith a carte-de-visite of Mr. Shaw (see) the eldest brother that you may form an idea of the friends I am living with, and by next mail probably another one of Mr. Hook: also.

I don't know whether I told you that Mr. Small Parker was married to Miss Cornison a few weeks ago in N. H. I. I know many like to know. Please inform Mr. A. that I do not know where at the day to present my letter of introduction to Mr. Sumner and the same also to the Rev. Mr. - friend Mr. Evans, whom I hear well of a few of.

With best love to your able daughter

Yours affectionate son,

Ed. Johnson

No. 10

Stephen

March 29 -

1863

Slipstream
No 13.

10
Woodside Post, Karakloof, Natal.

May 30. '63

4th March 1863.

Dear Mother,

I 3/3 - I believe I hope this will catch the mail as I would now answer your acceptable letter of the 5th Jan'y which came to hand this morning, together with Lizzie's handing one from Aunt Eliza. - I am glad you are ^{all} well, and that you are still all enjoying God's numberless mercies.

I am pleased your working meetings are so prosperous, and that you are increasingly interested in the mission in this part of the world: your acct of Miss Castle certainly is an interesting one, and I hope she will be made greatly useful. - I am delighted at the increase my Father has received to his means of the £100 from Grandmother who has so kindly divided her legacy amongst her children. I am sorry my Father hesitated to send me

that and the amount he received from the A. N. S. he invests on mortgage, which is safer than the bank and yields nearly as much interest. — I received a very acceptable letter from Mr. Allison also this morning, which with his last one I may perhaps send you. Sent him 20/6 as he is not in the receipt of much income being in connection with no society or congregation that also supports an aged mother in the old Colony. I gave him £10 before he left to continue his ^{no salary} for my present occupation covers all my expenses, leaving the interest of my £1000 invested — I hoped. — Since writing the foregoing I have expected Mr. Allison's two last letters have asked no doubt you will enjoy. I now enclose them. —

I was glad to receive 'dear Sir's' note: the eyes are very badly done, all the rest as very like her. — The draft on the South African Bank for £13.15. 6 has been duly cashed, and I have deposited it with my last dividend in my bank for 4 months on 1/2 of new shares which I am entitled to at £5 each and which I shall probably sell for £7. I got 870 francs for this deposit. — My share (69) yielded me £41.11.0 for the six months or about 870 francs for that period on the amount invested namely £519. — The total dividend for the year of my bank is 21 franc each on the £5 shares, which are now worth I believe £8.1 — This is for my father's information, I must enclose the same in haste,

Yours ever affectionate son
Ed. Norton.

Enclose a curious story
I wrote for Robert.

Dear Mother.

28th March. - I found after writing the foregoing that my informant had delivered a wrong message regarding the departure of the mail.

You ask what "Blue Gum" are: they are tall trees very similar to poplars, but of a dark colour & evergreen. They were imported from Australia, and now nearly every homestead is surrounded by them making them conspicuous: the leaves are inflammable.

With much love Your affectionate Son
A. J. Hobson.

Is not this a beautiful hymn?

Holy Saviour, Friend unseen,
Since on Thine arm thou bid'st me lean,
Help me throughout life's varying scene
By faith to cling to Thee.

Without a murmur I dismiss
My former dreams of earthly bliss,
My joy, my consolation this
Each hour to cling to Thee.

Though faith and hope awhile be tried
I need not, ask not aught beside,
How calm, how safe, how satisfied
The soul that clings to Thee.

They fear not Satan, or the grave,
They feel Thee near and strong to save,
Nor fear to cross Jordan's wave
Because they cling to Thee.

How blest my lot whatever befall
What can disturb me or appal
Whilst as my Rock, my strength, my all, I
Laviour, I cling to Thee.

"Unto you that believe He is precious."

Dear Father,

11th April. Sat^d Aftⁿ. - I returned to this my temporary home three days ago after a pleasant & profitable trip of eight days: a short account of it may be interesting to you. On the morning after my arrival I posted some letters that I had been able to write you acknowledging receipts of yours, and sending you also a carte-de-visite of M^r & M^{rs} Allison, all of which I trust have safely been received ere this reaches you. I then set out to see my friends and perform my little business; called on M^r Reynolds the Congregationalist Minister, dined with M^r Blencowe, Wesleyan Minister, and took tea with the Allison and again with M^{rs} Visick, who is M^{rs} Spearman's sister & keeps a school assisted by her eldest daughter: she is much troubled with headache which she described as a "compression" on the top of her head continuing sometimes for a fortnight & far worse than a sick headache: I recommended quinine, but M^{rs} V. says it is too strong. She is great for ventilation, sleeping at times with her bed-curtains blowing about, whereupon I remarked that I slept with my window open but such an amount of air would be sure to give me neuralgia. Miss Visick is pale & perfectly colourless almost livid. When I first came in I hoped they were disengaged, M^{rs} V. replied they were never disengaged, which in my opinion is what makes them appear so unhealthy. - I was so pleased at the thought of the relief I afforded M^r Allison; both of them alluded to it as God's care for them I mentioned how many similar acts they had experienced amounting to miracles. Once when in embarrassment they received a letter from a Quaker, who some 20 years before I believe had visited them on their station, allowing them to draw on him for £10. - The next day (Good Friday) I ~~was~~ rode to Edendale - M^r Allison's former station with M^r Blencowe's little son. This station is 6300 acres in extent and 8 miles from Town: M^r A. bought the land for £1300 and then commenced laying out the village which he called George Town after Sir G. Grey: he also built a flour mill which he has leased for 100 years at £180 p^a ann: to a M^r Carleton. I was much pleased to see the thriving & lively village that had arisen out of those wilds, which is a Maritzburg in miniature. I dined at M^r Carleton's, and after dinner we all started with two guests as an equestrian ^{party} to see the falls some 2 miles distant. We were much pleased with their beauty which we beheld from different points, quite close as well as farther off. - It is to this station that M^r Milward has been

attached, but when I was there that very day he was being married to a young lady just arrived from England. I regretted his absence as I had looked forward to seeing him again. — We had a lively evening after tea (in fact I was afterwards the worse for it) and started townwards at 8 which we reached in a little over an hour, my horses trotting nearly all the way. — The evening before I attended the prayer-meeting at Mr Reynolds who gave us a short but sweet address on the fulness of Christ. Next day (Saturday) is a great day in town when many Auction sales are held, and in walking about I met with Mr William & Mr Walter who were going to Paris — town the next day to be present at their brother Fred's wedding. The Sabbath I did not somehow enjoy so much as my expectations had anticipated. The number of people present at chapel was a pleasing feature to me, but the communion was not so profitable or soothing as I had looked forward to. I dined & took tea at the Plencoades who kindly asked me that I might avoid hotel conversation. I took a small class at the Wesleyan Haffis Sunday school, and afterwards delivered a short address to some Haffis, Mr Allison interpreting, in his school room. — I was glad of the opportunity of doing a little good. Attended Mr Reynolds' in the evening. — Next morning started at 10 to Mr Brooks 16 miles distant having a companion. Mr B. was confined to his bed with rheumatic fever and in great pain, had not had sleep either for 7 nights. I stayed 2 nights & a day, and had some delightful conversations with Mr B. which in fact was mostly of one topic all the time I was there. Left at 7 on Wednesday morning for Howick where I breakfasted and reached Mr Parrissou's at 12 with whom I dined (on bread & treacle with tea); I stayed with them a couple of hours and arrived at Clarendon about 4 o'clock, having been away just 8 days. — I commenced school next morning but had only 4 scholars, and also the next day. — I feel grateful for the good this trip has done both to my soul & body, which has to last me till the end of June. —

22nd April. — Mr Fred: brought his bride home last week, and he will now be more comfortable and settled: there will also be a more favorable influence exerted on the brothers at Clarendon. Mr Joe is extremely worldly, wrapped up in money-getting & its concomitant evils of self-interest, and disregard for the feelings of others.

I am sure you would enjoy the opportunities that I have of retirement among these
Blooms Hills, and which I enjoy frequently. We read that Christ withdrew to a mountain
to pray, and I can imagine how the quiet and undisturbed position might must have con-
duced to his spirit of devotion. — I have been wondering lately why I am not more
boldly and more like my great Example, who said "Learn of me, for I am meek and
lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." I write once a day, com-
munion with Christ is an invigorating & produces conformity to Him; now I am propa-
gated in His presence as my only friend, I know I am unknown myself, and yet I see
sometimes how comes myself that grieves me. — This passage much comforts me: "At
things work together for good to them that love God"; and therefore ^{what} ~~what~~ makes me un-
happy at times may be answers to my prayers. In the other hand I remember that
which you said in your last letter some regarding constitutional disorders, and I
believe that many of your errors proceed from my own self, in my spiritual & bodily
characters. —

Disturbance close and remain with love to all

Yours ever affectionate Son
A. A. Johnson.

26th Sept. Sabbath Evening. — Have you not found our readiness to trust and rely on
the things of earth, such as money, one strength (physical) & resources friends were there on
the Providence of God and that which His love will prompt? We are not His beloved, with
our names written on the palms of His hands, and may not all these supplies fail in
the very hour of need? Oh for that grace to cling solely by faith to Christ for every-
thing, temporal as well as spiritual necessities that we require! — Sometimes
dread to look forward upon the future course of my pilgrimages that I have to
head, and wish it was all over, and heaven realized. This selfishness of mind
gives me cause for anxiety, for it both manifests want of faith in my Redeemer
and a far all coming difficulties, and want of love to Him that I may promote
all that is dear to Him as come returns for all His wonderful kindness. — I have just

No. 16

Benjamin Stephens

No. 23 -
June 23 -
1863

been reading one of Hungeford's sermons on the forebodes of the heavenly life, which
I have found profitable. He speaks of heaven as a place of security; no fear of
slaying from the right path or backsliding here, and no cause for ~~distressing~~ self-
reproach, which is so bitter.

No 56 via Mauritius. Durban, Natal; ^{12/11}
22nd October 1866.
Rec. Dec. 20

My dear Father,

Durban 22nd Oct. — We have
had a glorious outpouring of the Holy
Spirit upon this town & locality, and many
have been converted under its power. Mr.
Mann — or rather the Congregational Church —
has or will receive an addition of 50 to its
members, and the total number of converts
is calculated at 358 white people and
700 Kafir. This has all resulted from the
ministrations of Mr. Taylor an travelling
American minister of the Epist. Method. sect.
It greatly grieves me to say that I missed
all the services both here & in Maritzburg:
I have not been able even to see Mr. Taylor
as he left by the steamer for Cape Town
before I came here. — When at Ladismith
talking over this revival with Mr. Blencome,
we both condemned it as attributable to
excitement, but I find I am far wrong, as
the emotional people among the Wesleyans
known for their loud "antering" have been
almost silent. It is the greatest trial I
have had I think — missing these services,
and I have had to ask the Lord in prayer

for assistance to bear it resignedly, I feel it so poignantly. - Mr^r Spearman is overjoyed, as William (his stepson) who was a drinker - I might almost say a drunkard - a swearer and rapidly hurrying on in progress in vile things has been converted, and brought after feeling great misery at the sight of his sins, to peace & joy in believing: I was perfectly ^{surprised} to see him the first night I slept at the Spearman's (we were in the same room & I arrived in the evening) go down upon his knees & pray before he got into bed, and pray again when he rose in the morning. Two of her sons have also been brought to Christ in this movement - George the married one, and Loe the youngest one, brought in at Bernham while passing thro' that village with his wagon. Many others I could name whom of course you would not know - except Mr Lavery Pinard (Mr Brown's relative) who walked up from the bottom of the crowded Wesleyan chapel to the communion rail. He is a man over 50, an attorney in this town, and a bachelor with previously rather early habits, but now he is so pleasant & social, and has been made the best crop of a class. - There were others beside myself who were prejudiced - even Mr Mann who stood at the doors of the Wesleyan Chapel till one of the ministers told him that many of his people were present, and then he went inside the communion rail. Afterwards he stated he was quite surprised at the abstractedness he could have in the midst of 500 people while speaking words of comfort to a penitent, even

though there was singing and praying going on: he could be as alone with that man or woman there as in his own study. All sorts of characters are now rejoicing, old & young, even children ask one another if they are happy, gamblers, backsliders, and others. - Mr Taylor has been described to me as a tall powerful man over 50 years of age with a stentorian voice which he modulates; he cannot be styled eloquent, in fact at times he was dry, but he told his message so plainly that there were only two roads a man could take, and if he took the wrong one, it was entirely his own fault. He was great in relating & selecting sacred tales, also in singing. And not the least good result is the unity that has been brought about between the Congregationalists & the Wesleyans; and the change that I see in the joyful countenances of many that have found Christ as their Saviour is the more perceptible from my absence of six months. - David Lumsden I am sorry to say has not been to any of the meetings, and does not exhibit any joy or even anxiety, though by no means a wicked young man: nor his sister, for which I am very sorry. I should have been so glad, if they had accepted the invitation of mercy & forgiveness. - I am told it was the prayer meetings that seemed to effect the most results, and so much were these services enjoyed that out of 500 people nearly all staid the whole time, namely 4 & 5 hours, and people have told me they should liked to have remained

all night. There were many of the Lyden-
ham people whose field of work lay 3 or
4 miles off that would hurry home, eat,
& cleanse themselves & then go off to Town,
which is 4 miles from that village, not return-
ing till between 2 & 3 o'clock in the morning
generally in Mr. Clarence's wagon, singing
hymns & tunes the way home. - I know one
man Mr. Neal, an uneducated Springfield
farmer that did all this & attended everyone
of the meetings; he had long been a happy
Christian, but now is still happier. - The
plan Mr. Taylor adopted was - after delivering
his message, to invite those who felt burdened
with sin up to the communion rail, and
many there found peace & deliverance. - Of course
the Devil was strong & showed himself: one
time a stone was thrown at Mr. Taylor while
preaching in the chapel but it did not hit him,
and though it fell among the crowded people
did no harm. This movement has been
ascribed to mesmerism, electro-biology,
and other things.

I expect the last mail steamer will miss
the one leaving Table Bay as it was very
late in arriving here, so perhaps this will reach
you sooner than my last letter. - I left Ladismiss
on the 11th after staying a week at Mrs. Teubel's
boarding house waiting for a wagon, and reached
Maritzburg after a pretty quick trip of 4 days
on the 14th, which I left again on the 16th half
walking down here, half riding in wagons. -
I am very glad to say that I have obtained
the title-deeds of both my pieces of land after
waiting months for them, and they are now

lying in Mr. Pinart's office. I am on
 the point of selling ^{my} 18 acres (near
 Town) to Mr. Blandy a rich young man
 from Madeira, who offers £25 a year for
 5 years with right of purchase for £300. I
 asked £350 but he will not give that, and
 now I shall ask £30 a year. Land is ex-
 cessively cheap just now, and many people
 doubt whether it will reach old prices: Mr.
 B. is an extremely honorable young man, and of
 large means that the firm he was in owe him,
 and as I could not get a better purchaser I
 think I shall close, even if I cannot get the
 increase I want. — With regard to the Shaws
 I find (from Mr. Lee's conversation with me)
 that their circumstances are much improved.
 They owed £400 to the Natal Bank on security,
 but they have now reduced it to £150, and
 their other outstanding debts do not exceed
 perhaps £50, so that I am now their largest
 creditor. They are the contractors to Govern-
 ment for timber & have received over £800
 from it, and they are now extending their
 business by entering upon wool pressing,
 having obtained the machinery from a man
 who will give them all ^{his} ~~their~~ wool and an
 unlimited time to pay in. — I have been
 wondering whether Uncle William could
 advance me any money or interest out
 of the legacy that is still due to me and
 supporting my Grandmother by its present

interest: it amounts to about £150 I think, and is called a reversion. I fear to write to him about it, as he might think it indelicate, so I ask your advice. It would be extremely useful just now, as money is not to be had, and house property ^{in town} is extremely & correspondingly cheap. This is the reason Mr Blandy will not give me Cash for my place, tho' ~~it~~ he wants it (as it adjoins his) for the way of access to his own. Could you drop Uncle William a note to the above effect, if you think there is nothing unseemly in it, and that he has or could obtain the means to lend. I would give 7 per cent interest. —

I cannot see the leadings or workings of Providence in my going to Zaaifontyn: I have seemed to derive no good nor done any good there — I was unhappy & uncomfortable and have missed these services of Mr Taylor. But perhaps I have been the means of doing some good — perhaps to the children, or Mr Carbutt, who always was glad to enter into a religious conversation with me, and poor man! he seemed ^{at first} to me to have a Socinian view of the Lord Jesus, or to ^{old} Mrs Watts, such a happy Christian in the entire absence of all human means or help. —

I thank God frequently & earnestly for the outpouring of His Spirit here, and for the many blessed results that have followed. One minister

has proposed that there should be praise meetings now, and I think that it decidedly should be carried out.

My various friends & acquaintances have given me hearty welcomes since I have returned, and seemed surprised at my appearing here again.

I shall be glad at seeing Robert out here on his way to China, if you do not think it impracticable. I should advise him to come to Cape Town either by ship or steamer - second class - and then up to Durban by steamer: by this manner, he would see more of this continent than coming direct.

I do not know what to do or how to occupy myself just now. Mr. Moir has asked me to join him in his chutnee, sauce, & curry powder, and blacking manufactures, which he is carrying out in competition against English manufactures. Trade is just now too dull to give him encouragement, but I think there is an opening in the Mauritius.

I remain

Your ever affectionate Son
Stephen Hobson.

No 61.2 Woodside Post, Kar Kloof, Natal,
Rec. June 24 6th May 1867

My dear Father,

Your letters of 9th Feby and 9th March with others also from my Mother, Jane and Robert have duly come to hand with many thanks, being sent up by the Post-master at Durban to whom I had applied. —

Your letter of 9th Feby gave me much pain and continues to do so, because of the many truths you have brought home to me, and because of the position I appear in to the family. I do not like to be humiliated (who does?), but it is nevertheless necessary, and I hope what you have written may do me the good you no doubt intended. — I am sorry that you have such a weak-minded Son, but I never had much strength of mind, and the little I have is gradually diminishing, but I am glad that the employment of supporting the honor & sustaining the interest of the family has fallen upon your second Son, and you may forget me if you like. — I shall most likely stay altogether in Natal, but where I don't know, and it does not disturb me to consider

~~but~~^{for} my wants are very few and with a small
sum I can cover all my expences - at present a
shilling a day pays for my food household expences -
and whether I shall ever marry I can't say - some-
times I think never. - I have, thank God, a small
independency (by many envied) which I shall take
care of, and I wish my life to be as profitably em-
ployed as I can with the principle of working for
God. - I am not ambitious, and lacking power
of character, cannot afford to be, nor am I clever
in buying selling or bargaining, and ^{shall} try to get
some one else to do it for me. - I shall now answer
the queries you make with other remarks. - The
reasons I got disgusted with my Coffee plantation (18
Acres) were that I found its position a most unfavorable
one for growing Coffee being high & greatly exposed to
the N.E. wind which almost constantly blew direct
upon the place from the sea only distant some 2 or 3 miles.
There was a range of hills - the Berea - but that sheltered
only the lower part, where the plants flourished luxur-
iantly, but on the upper part (the larger portion) they were
poor & blasted from this strong North wind. Then the
great drawbacks I suffered from want of plants,
absence of rain, and the great outlay I went to, in
the first year greatly frightened & discouraged me,
together with the need of funds to work it ultimately
as my income was diminished by one half. An old
Coffee planter named Kawa from Ceylon corroborated
my idea of the land's inadaptability, and while
distant friends asked me whether I could not plant
breakwinds of bananas, bamboos &c, my answer was,
"The land is rather a steep slope, and the ground so
occupied would leave but little room for the Coffee".
Then again the soil was of red sand, which though
rich at first ~~grows~~ on the surface from the decomposed

matter of the Rush ^{would be} ~~was~~ soon exhausted, and manur-
ing is an expensive process. — The manner I have
sold ~~the~~ or rather leased the plantation is a very
common one in this Colony, and one which I should
always adopt; you are mistaken in thinking it is
~~an~~ disadvantageous to me, as if Mr. Blandy does
not purchase at the expiration of the 5 years lease,
then all his improvements fall into my hands, and
he has already built two cottage brick houses — a
stable & a place for his white man. Where I shall suffer
most likely is that at the end of 5 years, the land will
be worth more than the £300, hoping that the Colony
will be prosperous again before that time. — The
150 Acre piece labours under the same ^{dis}advantages
as the other, and moreover has no water upon it.
Mr. Spearman was the seller & made 57 an Acre profit
upon it, so it is no wonder he recommended it.

The reason that I wanted you to borrow money
of Mr. William Abbot — giving my reversion as security
was to pay you off my debt of £60, and I thought
he could spare £100 at 7 per cent. — I can't see
anything offensive in it, and the other relatives need
not know anything about it. — The farm I preferred
to near Maritzburg, I found to be leased, and I was
in a hurry to reach the Bay so only stayed at the City
two days. — The wagon I never purchased of Messrs
Shaw as no opportunity occurred of exchanging it,
the parties I looked to altering their plans. — Then
as to my future, what shall that be? The Shaws
say why don't I get a few cows to keep and look after them;
in return I ask them, how can I buy when I can't sell
I cannot obtain the wherewith to buy; except I borrow I
cannot procure stock or land or anything. Provided
I could, how should I a single-handed man enter
on such a project — with a partner I might, but partner-
ships are dangerous & troublesome. — Therefore sooner

than do nothing and waste my time, I accepted
Mr. William Shaw's offer of £12 per annum to teach
his 4 children (ridiculously small tho' it was) and
commenced Mr. Jacob's school - Mr. J. is our minister -
charging 5/- a month for the other children also, which
brings me in £5/- a month. Mr. Jacob is coming
over tomorrow to teach the school, but whether he
intends to take it definitely & altogether, I cannot
say; however of course I shall resign it to him.

I refer now to the other contents of your letter,
I am truly glad that at last Robert has certainly
obtained the appointment in China, but it causes
me much more happiness to know that he is a
child of God, for I know the value of that. - As you
will be put to considerable expence by his stay on
the Continent & passage to China, I shall try to re-
mit you by next mail £10 or 20 to come off my debt ^{as a little help.}
With regard to your kind invitation to come to Eng-
land before he leaves, I must decline, though it
would have been exceedingly delightful to me to
have gone. - His going by the Messagerie Imperiale
of course puts it out of possibility for him to come
here, and see me on his way. -

I must now close and with much love to
all remain,
Your affectionate son,
Ed. Hobson.

No 80.

Maritzburg, Natal; 8th July, 1868.Rec^d Aug. 22nd

My dear Mother,

30/6. - I received no letters from you by the last mail, which arrived here on the 24th, and I have come to the conclusion that either you did not write, or your letters missed the mail: I hardly have a right to expect anything after your long & frequent epistles, but I was desirous to have the acknowledgment of my first remittance that I made you in my No 70 of 22nd Feb^y. I am thinking of going to the bank to enquire if they have heard of the draft being presented.

I wrote you last on the 24th June, and now that there is fortnightly communication with England (via the Cape), I shall try to forward you a few lines every time.

7th July. - Your two letters were handed to me by Mr Allison in my schoolroom - ^{this morning} - dates of 9th May and 23rd May: the first should have come last fortnight, but tho' the Birmingham post mark is May 9, the London one is May 11. - The steamer this time is two days fully before its time - very pleasantly.

Many thanks for writing to acknowledge the receipt of my £10 draft (the Bank does not give duplicates); and I hope in two days you will receive mine of May 23rd with my third £10 remittance. I do not know whether I shall be able to remit any money by this mail: Mr Shaw's interest (£22. 8. 2) was due last Wednesday the 1st July, but he says he can't pay as he finds collecting money so hard now, even some of his debtors laugh at him - at the idea I suppose.

He talks of paying me off some of the Capital, and letting the interest, now due, stand over: this is Natal style perhaps, or certainly not Joe Shaw's, who is wedded to Lucie. When payment time comes he says he is hard up, but when it is distant, boasts that Government has paid them for their timber contracts £1500 to £2000 for the year and that their expenses for carrying on the business have been over £100 the last month. - I am glad ~~that~~ my £100 with the £10 arrived safely; I was anxious a little about it, or rather surprised at its long travelling, and enquired at the Bank about it but the people there could give me no information. -

Aunt Eliza's opinion about Mr Allison is quite wrong, quite wrong; there is not the slightest appearance of decay in Mr Allison. All I have to say in explanation is that he is a wonderful man, that he is a wonderful man. His age now is 72, and he is as erect, as keen, as active as a man of 50 or even 40. He certainly has been a long time in South Africa and in various missionary fields in South Africa, (not only in the Colony as Aunt E. is ever ~~stinks~~), and there is every prospect of his continuing years in the same state. He is as tough as pen wire, and I see no wear in him: if you look at the photograph I sent you in 1862 you will see that he is no thin stout robust, but thin swiny-looking. Of course he has wrinkles in his face, and white hair; but in his conversation he is as discriminative as jocular as ever - the latter too much to sarcasm for my taste. With regard to the marriage, every one of course called out that it was unsuitable and for a short time it was a 9 days wonder; but they appear to me to get on very well together, and I am frequently calling or taking tea. They are both very cordial to me, and he is very pleased at the way (notwithstanding my ignorance of the language, which I seem unable to learn) I have put the Corp on. Mr Allison is I think a kind

in ordering her husband about, which however he does not yield to always. — Major's connection with the school is of a secular character altogether, and as such I receive a grant from Government. Mr Allison teaches them in the morning from the scriptures, and on the Lord's Days from the pulpit. —

Your letters are all the more welcome from the knowledge of your self denial, which at the same time gave me a feeling of pain that you were doing too much for me. I felt when reading them that you were overdoing yourself by corresponding with ^{of the} family at the same time. — All your extracts were as usual prized: the 4 leaflets (incl: Robert's) seem beautiful for I have not had time to read them yet, and the little book "old Jacob Moore". Dup: B. D. ading all right.

I am truly glad that my Father is having such a pleasant & remarkable change as a stay in the Highlands at St. Dickson's country place. And Lissie's at Tentnor. But when are you going out? It is your turn now I really think. I have been to Clarendon some weeks ago, and next time month I hope to go to the Bay for 10 days. Therefore it must be your turn, as also Robert is expecting to go to Canton or Peking, and I hope you will take it. —

The Colony just now is in a great state of excitement from news that the tract of country to which a small party started, turns out to be a rich gold field — an exceedingly rich gold field — the richest in the world from accounts. In a fortnight letters and specimens are expected. — This was discovered by a German traveler & geologist named Herr Mauch, some 8 or 9 months since, and his statements have turned out to the letter. It is situated 950 miles from here, and is, I believe 30 miles only south of the Zambesi (pronounce the S in this word like the English A — thus Zāmbazi, and then you have it correctly; very few people know this, even here, but it is right being the natives call it and my boys also. It comes to me naturally as that is Kafir orthography.) — We shall

have a rush from this place and the old Colony; perhaps many from England & Australia. It is all God's work I believe to get the uttermost parts of the earth made known. -

With respect again to Mr Allison, I do not see the least appearance of nervousness or nervous disease. And now I am ~~much~~ glad to report that he is much interested in his work. He baptised ³⁶ Kafirs last Sunday night, when I was present: some of these were boys who attend my daily school. (The word "boy" does not necessarily mean a juvenile: it is the same as the old China expression). Mr A. has wonderful power over all Kafirs - they all fear him, and acknowledge his authority. - The volume (bound) of the Missionary news you sent me by the post out of Mr Thoburn's money has very much pleased Mr Allison, and also my boys, who were delighted with the pictures. -

8/7. Mrs Allison's school now amounts to 10 children, black, white, & half castes, (the white are the children of poor parents) all of whom she teaches for nothing. She might have more, but her want of room prevents her: however now that Mr & Mrs Coillard have left for Huruman (Mr Moffat's Station), they will move into the house just vacated. ^{and which is larger} - I wrote rather vigorously yesterday about Mr A, because the contrast struck me as so very great between Aunt Eliza's supposition of decay & the system giving in, and the real position of the case. Please don't call him "poor old gentleman" any more: his pride would be deeply mortified if he heard the expression. -

I have just thought that very likely what my Father describes at Dr Dickson's place as "for miles the most sterile & wild scenery you can imagine without man, or beast (except perhaps a few sheep), or tree, or shrub, or bird, perfect desolation & solitariness" would very much resemble Natal scenery excepting the sterility, and ruggedness.

I heard last night that 22 wagons are going up to the "diggings" with goods, and that passengers can go at £10 a head - 6 persons to a wagon. Also that Mr Brooks has a large quantity of miners' goods on the water, such as waterproof sheets, belts &c, so you see what a ~~poor~~ state of excitement we shall be in. -

I wrote the above bit just after breakfast, and I was shivering with cold, for we are having extraordinary weather in the shape of heavy showers of rain accompanied by lightning & thunder. I understand it poured with rain last night & rolls of deep thunder succeeded one another, but I was in unconscious sleep all the time. The streets are strangely changed from dust into mud, and bright sunshine into gloom & murkiness.

This cold rain is trying, I may say killing, to cattle, who ~~have~~ find no strength or nutriment in the present dried up grass, but it is good for forage (oats) and wheat, not however for grass which will jump up to be killed by the next frost. I have never seen such unseasonable weather since I have been in Natal. The coffee & sugar planters will rejoice.

Your book packet I received this morning with many thanks, and I had only a penny to pay on it, I have generally 3 and 4 ^d. - but there was another clerk. This is Colonial law that all newspapers from abroad pay a penny each, but Colonial papers are free of postage altogether.

I am thinking of leaving Mr Harrison's for various reasons. First I want to live cheaper. I pay now 21/- & 22/- (including washing) every week alternately, and I want to live for less. Secondly Mr H's is a very noisy house - I can hear almost all the conversation in the dwelling room, and am sometimes so disturbed that I can hardly read or pray. Thirdly.

I don't like Mr^s Harrison's ^{tongue} which is very active; her voice which is loud & searching, and her language which is coarse & ungrammatical. Fourthly I want to live on the spot where my boys are & my schoolroom is. Mr^s Allison has offered me his house that he is vacating at only £2 a month, which is cheap, being very comfortable - warm in winter & cool in ~~winter~~ ^{summer} from the walls being thickly built with stones: but I cannot afford £2 a month - what I want being one or two rooms & a kitchen.

It has delighted me to think of Robert, as my Father says, as "a marked man". He is often in my prayers that he may be upheld, and made a blessing to others. But I differ from him in staying or rather living in the Customs House: the poisonous conversation ^{heard} drove me from Smith Kennedy & Co's mainly, as I felt it almost overwhelming, and it is easy for persons to say "stop", who have not gone through it. It was a pity for me that Mr^s Creiff Grove & Co failed as there I was comfortable, was in my right place, and heard none of it.

Since writing the foregoing, Mr^s Allison has agreed to let me have a room & a kitchen; and I have agreed to pay £1 (one pound) a month, at which I am very glad. I shall give notice to Mr^s Harrison tomorrow, to leave on the 16th which is a little over a week. I hope she will be able to secure a lodger very soon.

No more at present till next mail. I had fully intended writing to Sissie.

Your ever affectionate Son,
Stephen Hobson.

When Mr^s Shaw pays me, I shall inform him that I take it only as interest.

To June - July 14 & 23rd 1868^{15/11}

"When my last (8th July) left here, we were in a state of glorious rain. You in England can hardly appreciate my enthusiasm who have so much vapour & moisture; but then we have had nothing better than dew for the last 2 months, and had moreover a prospect of two months more of the same dryness before this season breaks up. Such a continuous, soaking, heavy rain has never been known in the Uplands district before I believe, tho' on the coast a shower or two (not nearly so heavy though) is rather the rule than the exception. And now the weather is superb - a fresh breeze blows exhilaratingly, which so moderates the heat of the sun as to make exposure near to his rays to be agreeable rather than shuntable, and to stand in the shadow of a house a chilly proceeding. If the atmosphere is so enjoyable here in Town, it must be perfectly intoxicating up at Clarendon

It is so lovely now to watch the snowflakes working of their spirit - while they clouds drift across the drifting fells of increased purity - deep blue sky, covering along so many of its story. This constitutes simply why some winter it has been strange to see the happiness of man - anything else is a cloud, nothing but dreams, with the happy heart as it is, the heart is like, I don't know whether you have heard as now, & day as I have that, the heart is before this time, at midday was not comfortable - as to pray to him to assist you to do this, which as you are not comfortable perhaps is what he - don't look at others - this but we country it is not so warm, short comings - but believe yourself to the When I was away work at his, something of the gracious spirit, and - well, I never remember perceiving in that winter, though I am certain - I do give in - if we can - any thing that will drive perfections out of a man more pleasing than with I should work. - I am glad to say, and I feel thankful to God, that now I feel very well, I am glad to see, and I am glad to see that good health is the result of the recent change in the weather. But much as I prize this helping my greatest solicitude is for that constant enjoyment of God, in his presence & in his character - by fellowship with him in prayer, and the knowing him in his Word by the

as a warning slap with these for me now from God, and he is now going through the old Testament, which is as a practical for these as he can. There comes one for the best of the day, knocking off at 5 or a little before. - I do a small room

for sitting & sleeping in, and a kitchen,
for which I pay a pound a month.
I bought at the last Saturday auction
sale a round table for 19/- and 3 light
bed room cane-bottomed chairs for
3/- a piece, & a dozen willow pattern
breakfast plates for 2/6 the lot. I obtain
my dinners daily from Mrs Harrison
at a shilling a day, sending my own
servant, Marasi for it, & she so plenti-
fully supplies me that I have abundance
for breakfast next morning. Mr Allison
has a couple of cows, so she pours a
stream of milk into my cup of chocolate
in the morning, & I have some to drink
at dinner. Mr A. is using my kitchen
at present, while the chimney of his
is being altered, but today I shall be
alone. This Marasi that I have mentioned
above is such a nice fellow (^{Samuel} Samyeli)
Marasi; though ungainly in appearance
being a dwarf, he is a happy Christian,
and I am convinced that he will spend
eternity with Christ. This & his anxiety
to serve me causes me to love him
& respect him, even though many
would call him a "nigger".
For a bed I have a door laid

upon a couple of trepels upon which
I place my mattrap, which is composed
of a sheet sewn down 2 sides & thus made
into an enormous sack, which Marasi
& I stuffed yesterday with hay, a truss of
which I bought for a shilling, and I have
some over. I bought the other day a
teapot & 2 canisters for 8/- & a bucket
(iron) for 3/- and now I want 1/2 a dozen
cups & saucers, but I have only 4/11 -
and pay day is 10 days off, so I am quietly
in a pickle. However I am going to threaten
Mr Shaw with a summons if he does
not at once pay me his debt. I meant
to have supplied Robert with the above
particulars, but no doubt they will in-
terest you too. —

There is great excitement in Durban
& Maritzburg in connection with the gold
field — (fabled a reef 200 miles in length
as Herr Mauch — remember the gutta serena
declares it to be, she is the discoverer).
Some quartz with gold in it has already
arrived at Durban, being received by a
large firm there, which has an enter-
prising agent at Potchefstroom (Capital
of the Transvaal Republic) that forwards
it to them. Crowds of Durbanites have
been to see it, & it has been sent

for ~~the~~ by the Governor up here. This
piece is said to be very rich in gold.

To Robert - July 23rd 1868 1513

Rec^d. here, Sep^r 7th

"Blessed is he, whose ever shall
not be offended in me."

My dear Brother

My last was merely a
stop-gap - or at least I wish it to be
considered such. A week ago another
of yours has reached me, which I was
very glad to receive. It is very pleasant
to hear of old Shanghai again, and though
the names you mention come familiarly
to my ear, the images of the individuals
don't come so rapidly to my imagination.
I believe I could at once make my way
from the London Mission Compound
over the yang-king-pang creek, round Mr
Cunningham's to Mr Lambuth's, but I don't
think I saw so much of Mr L. as to re-
cognize him now. I remember he had
some very fierce dogs that used to rush
out at me. There used to be a very large
horse shoe grave about a mile beyond Mr
Lambuth's, that as the highest eminence
about, gave a view of the bubbling well

The country seems about - what you go. I don't ask for it - your way just up & down. I don't ask for it as I need to do. I suppose the 40 minute tree has been with the Chopped down - on the road to it. I need to pass a house (which was near a bridge over a large creek) where I often noticed a coffee - ready for its purchaser I suppose - that stood - next to the gangway. - To the Baby - lower still. Detaching? I remember once joining you & your side, turning to climbing up to its windward opening the apartment. But you will have to suffer, don't you only a number of wetted bundles. I don't need often to go also to the large graves I have just written about, sometimes by way of the 'Lambeth's', sometimes by the 'Gate' by the North Gate - especially the 'Ching's' Guild. I need to say that water with the dear child or - certainly, and we had named 'man for - gotten' for the various kinds. We need sometimes for a change to take a detour and go over to 'Bob's' and 'ah', which I have a general comparison to go about with me now.

We have decided to stop in the 'Crestons' 'something' house, it is no more repeating my opinion that I could not stand it, others receiving in their presence the usual who with such ungodly conversation. I know the fact that a single person who in the midst of the laughter of all the rest, remains still & unmoved, checks immensely their untimely mirth, and I earnestly hope that you will very soon have one, & then too, when another joins you & your side, turning to repent, may you continue to have an ever kinder conscience, and an intricate habit to all their pleasure.

I don't give up taking regular exercise in the afternoon or evening. Look out for him. Get a pull in a wherry when ever you can: it is one of the best constitutionalizing I know. I need to go with nothing with sometimes, and it is often did work - develops your muscles in an elegant & expands the chest, especially when you pull against the tide. We need to go under the 'do' show bridge, & up the 'do' show creek. And it is cheaper than double keeping, as

your instrument of relaxation requires
no daily feeding. But I say, don't
take too much tea - you will weaken
your nerves. Last summer I used
to have a cup of tea at dinner, but
I gave it up soon. - I go for exercise
every other afternoon to a Gymnasium
in the College grounds with a few other
young men, and I find it does me
a world of good. I remember a few of
the various exercises I learnt at Leather-
head, & now bring them into practice
again. It is so amusing to see one
of us (Mr Ireland) try to do his best:
he is a married man, but tries so hard
to accomplish the performance, & he has
got on decidedly notwithstanding his
ignorance before. One young fellow
(Alfred Dutton) a boy of 16 has made
the most progress; he is little & rather
active, but now he wants skill to
perform what I call cleanly. Robert
Visick (in the Govt. service, clerk to the Master
of the Supreme Court) is very persevering
but wants lightening: he is 23 & heavier
than I am. How many times can you
pull up - slowly I mean & putting the

head clean over the bar each time! ^{15/4} 2
I think I can manage 8 or 9 times.
We have broken two posts since we
have been there - a few weeks - so you
see we have done something. - I have
sent my other horse on to the farm -
"Clarendon" Mr Shaw's - as his food is
becoming too expensive now. Do you
like riding? It is very pleasant to go
in a party of five or 6 a short way
into the country. But to take a journey
of 30 or 50 miles alone is tiresome:
with a companion, even a Kafir, it
is all right as your horse enjoys society
like its rider. Horses are hard to sell now.
I saw a splendid animal, fully 16
hands, & nearly 17, of a large frame, in
good condition, a handsome charger,
sold for £10 the other Saturday Auction
sale; and its saddle, a first class pigskin,
for £5 - the ^{lot} for £15. The purchaser
quietly mounted & rode away on his
purchase.

Now a few words about my occupa-
tion. My boys are steadily & slowly making
progress - latterly I have had 16 daily.
They are men, whose ages vary from
18 to 28, two of them reach 16ⁱⁿ height.

They are Basutos, not natives of this Gospel as shown by one of these men, saying, not belonging to it: their home the ships of a large town had reached his some 700 miles from here take with him at some distance off. - On the 8th of that April Republic which is called the Transvaal, and in a district of it named Gontsantseberg or Salt-pans Mmou - a splendid yellow cattle pasto of sheep, who came, the pupils of all Christians the - house out afterwards to be a ship. They - live, & nearly all baptised. They came to be as free to do something here especially about 3 years ago for the of the same kind themselves; and the people of obtaining work, taking the money they the officiating of this place, its chap- back to purchase cows which they exchange with & immediate action, whereby 20 lbs for oxen. But they were drawn in to the - not native Christians are depicted in Mmou's Kapin chapel, heard the Gospel, and into a neglected country, who can speak of God's grace accept it. These instructions & work chiefly in their own language & are now able, their language at present Mmou's most effectively, while the being to preach that which they know - while suspicious comes with his large Christ's free celebration. - The band of these establishment, ignorant of the language now - 6 in number - has already gone & sustained of the people. - The Mmou up to their own country, just before is doing a splendid work, & it is a name to live in Mmou's, and filling continuation of that which has been another band of 6 is working in colony occupied his life. The same 2 or 3 weeks, of my own boys, who are Church of Scotland Missions Soc. say their most anxious to return home, having received letters from their old a his chapel (erected by his own individual few months before were almost naked exiles); his church consisting of 232 (some 11) from the first company members (Mmou this is correct) the of what they had done - has that result of 4 years' work in this house, the representations of Mmou's and his present services. The Mmou the helping the has made £180 private income derived

from the rent of a flour mill he erected at Edendale, which is the largest Kafir station in ~~all~~ all South Africa, and his entire establishing; and Mr A. has moreover a large double stone house, into part of which I intend removing tomorrow. He spends a part of this in feeding some of my boys (at present 8), lighting the chapel where every night (except Saturday) 8 lamps are burning for the evening services & night school, where over 100 Kafirs attend constantly, and keeping the whole establishment in order & repair. —

I can tell you Mr Allison is a wonderful man; tho' 64 years of age, ^(I think) he is as erect, as strong, as active, as keen as a man of 50. Numbers of Kafirs come to him for advice; and his influence, tho' seemingly unexerted, is boundless. He is wonderfully endowed - is naturally a capital engineer (his ideas about our great Harbor Works on which over £100,000 have been wasted coincide with those of Mr Pevistow, lately second in command under Branel, but now of this town), is a rapid draughtsman & sketcher, very mechanical & quite at home with tools, & he is exceptionally

1515 (3)
ingenious. He has set up 14 stations;
and at the present moment I am
delighted to say is thoroughly absorbed
in his work, in which he appeared to me
to show a declination previous to his
second marriage (a happy one), and
which I attribute to the great misery
he was in from the death of his first
wife, & his subsequent loneliness.

Such is a short sketch of Mr. Allison,
and I think you would find his spirit
contagious if you listened to some of
his wonderful & varied missionary
experience. I desire that it may ever
prove so fully to me with God's blessing.

I think it is Mr. A's wish that I - if
I had the qualifications - should be his
successor, and that he is disappointed
that he cannot think of me as such,
for he knows of no one who could
carry on his work if he were suddenly
removed by death. It saddens him
that there is no missionary spirit
in the place, as even Mr. Campbell
& Mr. Smith, ministers of the same
sect as himself now, seem to have
no desire to infuse this spirit into
the church to which they minister.

tho' they are both fervent, especially Mr Smith, in advocating the privileges of the Gospel! I should be overjoyed if the mantle of Mr Allison would fall upon me, as Elijah's fell upon Elisha: I should have no greater happiness, and have no higher wish.

I finished this morning (July 22) Moffat's Work written in '42 - Of course I had seen it before, but I had never read it with such interest & pleasure. Of course many of the incidents (deserts & lions excepted) and customs are familiar to me.

The gold news is confirmed - specimens very rich having been received here, & now. I expect we shall have a rush; droves of people will flock on shore, our colony being the nearest & best route to the gold field w^{ch} is 950 miles distant from this town, & requires two months' travelling in an ox waggon.

Praying that you may be made bold in the cause of our God, and wise withal, I remain

Your ever attached Brother
B. S. Hobson

No 82. Maritzburg, Natal; 8th August 1868.

Rec^d - Sept 21

My dear Mother,

7/8. - The "Ocean Dart" arrived here safely nearly 3 weeks ago, and on the 1st David Lumsden & I went aboard her and took the chest ashore, and there we found a wagon loading up for Maritzburg, so we put it in, paying 3/-, and I found it when I arrived here ^{yesterday}. Every thing was in perfect order, and most wonderfully packed, so that I ~~could~~ ^{must} ~~not~~ repeat the remark of Robert's - "it seemed a pity to take the things out." The clothes fit me quite right - at least the priest's grey do, as I am now wearing them - but the thicker ones I think are a little too warm & heavy. The boots are excellent, and are a right size: I wore the 16/6 pair today all right - they are cheap and I save at least 9/-: the slippers are making my feet comfortable at this moment. The collars are all too small a size - I wear 15½ as I like being very loose at the neck, but I can exchange them most likely. I have not yet worn stick ups, but they will do - perhaps the 15s will fit me. - All the clothes are very neat, and quite in accordance with my tastes. The neck ties are most pretty, but I can hardly give an opinion as I have been busy all day, and have only given them a glance. I called Mr & Mrs Allison to come and see the contents as soon as I had done so by myself first.

and had thought of the two pairs of dear hands
that had placed them there. I did not forget to
ask God's blessing on bended knees on you all, for
home was brought so plainly before me. Mr &
Mrs A. I wanted to enjoy the sight with me, and they
were much pleased: Mrs A. liked the two Turkish
Towels best of all she said. I gave Mr A. one pair
of braces, tho' he ^{had} said ^{before} they were common ones, for
which he thanked me: the other pair & the large
black neck tie I shall give to Mr Godfrey. — The
printed cambric handkerchiefs (as Mrs A. says
they are) I admire, and gave one (with little hea-
gons) to Marasi, ^{my faithful servant} as he said "he liked my Mama
vera much, she was so good to me." — The cap I
have worn with much pleasure, and today have
had on the white & black flannel shirt, but it is too
sawarun for me, but the two will be useful to me —
at the Diggings. — The brass clock I shall take
to a watch maker as it is loose in its case; it looks
very serviceable and the bracket quite elegant: the
rails (brass-headed) you noticed you did not
forget. The Bible is superb, and my Father's
and Mother's writing ornaments it. You wrapped
up the various books most neatly and in that fine
strong Chinese or Japanese ^{papers} ~~books~~: Mrs Allison re-
marked that they looked as if fresh from the
store: they and the numerous pamphlets will come
in most useful for lending at the Diggings. — The
Oriental curios I am exhibiting about, and they
excite great interest: I am glad you send them, ^{and}
the old China jacket. — I shall be constantly

reminded of Mrs Thorburn by her clock and
kitchen case, both showing the swift passage of time,
and the necessity of making use of every opportunity
working hard, looking unto the Lord. —

I found all your Missie's notes. Many thanks for
sending so many collars. — I should very much liked to
wear them as home ones. — You know how thankful
I feel for all these things you have sent me and given
me, and the pleasure it gives to receive anything
from home, so I will not try to say anything more
in words. —

You will learn from my Father's letter (accompany-
ing this) of the proceedings I have taken with respect to
going to the gold fields. My purpose is not to acquire
treasure, but to help to open out South Africa; and
our company will be well equipped. But there will
be some roughing, which I shall feel at first as my
7 months-sojourn in Maritzburg has softened me. —

8/8. A fortnight ago I received my Father's letter of
June 9th Yours (no 8) of the same date, and Missie's
also — all very acceptable. Also the various papers and
pamphlets. The steamer is again in — yesterday, and
brought me the "Missionary news". — Excuse me
answering your letters further as this morning I feel
excessively "carey" — a sort of frightened feeling as
of impending danger: I had it one day also when at
the Bay lately. — In the "Missionary News" there is
a copy of a photograph of the ~~small~~ first band of
Mt. Allison Basutos that went up 7 or 8 months to
their homes at Jontpaneberg. It appeared a fortnight
ago in the Chronicle of the Free Ch. of Scotland Miss'ry

Lock, and it is a sad caricature - I can hardly
recognise the man. You can compare it with the
photograph I sent you before of them. --

No more at present from

Your affectionate son,

R. S. Hobson.

Ms
2

No 81.

Maritzburg, Natal, 8th August
1868.Rec^d - Sep^r 21st

My dear Father,

7/8. - Will it surprise you to learn that I am starting for the Gold fields as soon as the spring rains set in? - I returned yesterday from the Bay, where I went a week yesterday to organise & equip or help to equip a company for this purpose. The precedents were as follows: - some 2 or 3 weeks ago W^c Shaw asked me whether I would like my loan returned, and added that he thought I ought to knock off last year's interest as when the bargain was made in July '63, they had agreed to pay me more than was my due, from the fact that 7 or 8 horses had died during our partnership. Yet they had pledged to pay me the whole of the first cost. He acknowledged he had no legal claim, but thought there was a strong moral one. I replied in a plain dissenting voice, but the next day I thought of the advantages of putting an end to the disagreeable loan and of having the cash, and agreed to forego half last year's interest. In a few days after (28th July) he paid me down in cash £230, and I delivered up my promissory note. - The matter was on my

mind - what was this sent to me so unexpectedly for? Up to that period, the gold fields had excited very little personal interest in me, and I had never dreamt of going there, but soon it came before me, the idea that I should go now, especially as I had heard that Mr Bottomley ^{of Durban} declare that as many Christians as possible ought to travel there, and he thought that those who had borne the heat & burden of the day in this country ought to be there first. - It was with some reluctance that I mentioned my views to Mr Allison, as it appeared to me like deserting the gospel plough, but to my surprise he said - go and God speed you. My private idea is that he is not sorry ^{at} seeing me resigning my post as he wants some one who can alternate with him in the services, but he is a Scotchman, and cautious & reserved.

Strange to say a few hours before he had been telling me of a young man (a Scotchman) brought in at the late Revival, who was very interested in Kafir work & wanted an opening, possessing also a knowledge of the language which he is at present increasing by study: so after arranging with young William Duntou to take my duties by my paying him a pound a week, I started for the Bay in the Bus 9 days ago to see George & Joseph Spearman, whose advertisement (offering their wagons & services for the gold fields) I had seen, and whom I knew to be the very best in my knowledge I could select for the purpose. And now the Company consists of Mr Job Baker, who has been a miner in the Gold fields of

Australia his a geologist, the two fore mentioned
Spearmans, young Ralph Clarence I think (his
determination has not been definitely given), and
myself. The company hires the two wagons with
18 fat good strong oxen to each wagon for the space
of one year for £150 each wagon of the Spearmans
or to speak more truthfully the company take one
in 5 one fifth shares, and I take the ~~wagon~~ other for
the purpose of trading. We are all members of the
Church - Geo: Hoe Spearman (the former 29 & the
latter 22 years of age) are Wesleyans, and the rest
of us Congregationalists. Mr Baker leaves a wife
& two daughters (the eldest, it is believed, engaged
to young Ralph Clarence who is 23 years old). We
take up food & implements for a twelve month to the
weight of 5000 lbs or less, and I think of taking up
two tons of sugar which I purchase at Durban at
2^d a lb and sell at Potchefstroom for 1/4 or 1/6 -
at least 500 per cent profit, and the proceeds I shall
take out in food for sale at the diggings. I have
paid down £75, my half payment for one wagon
and £15 for my half share in the other, and lent
the Company £70 to buy stores toith for the expe-
dition while things are cheap: George Spearman
will purchase tomorrow and he knows the best
& cheapest places to buy at. He is a very different
man from his father, and his wife is a fine large-
minded woman - they both asked me about this
loan, and thoroughly understand that I look
to that amount to purchasing my trading stock
with. I have perfect confidence in these two, and as

much in Joe Spearman, their brother. Mr. Baker is a perfectly honorable man, a deacon of Lydenham Church, a dry humoured stick, queer & very obstinate. Ralph Clarence is not generous, but he has retained his piety & is active in speaking for Christ: he and Joe are Afrianders i.e. born in this country. — My object in going is to help to open up South Africa, so long closed up, and to try to mitigate the evil that large crowds of white men will exercise there by way influence and endeavouring to preach the Gospel by speaking and book & tract distribution. I can rely on Ralph Clarence joining me in this — nay I expect he will go beyond me as his heart is warmer than mine. Mr. Baker does not like ostentation, and is not acceptable as a preacher being dry & quiet, tho' an active thinker. — I was strenuous on the point that we should all be believers, and I am glad it is so — in fact I would have broken off had it been otherwise. —

P.S. I enclose an A/c of how I stand with you, by which you will see that I owe you £24.10/- I had thought of sending £10 by this mail, but cash is so useful now for outfitting that I thought you would perhaps let it stand over for awhile. On the other side of the A/c you will see a list of four equipments.

Your affectionate son,
R. L. Hobson.

I enclose a copy of the Report of the Retail Bank.

No 83.

Maritzburg, Natal; 21st August 1868.
Received Oct. 10th

My dear Mother,

19th Aug:— In my last I referred to some of the various articles received in my chest by the "Ocean Dart"; I am glad to add now that they give me even more satisfaction than then. The clothes fit me well, and are very neat & becoming, especially the priest's grey suit — the other suit is rather too thick & heavy, but I wear it on Sundays—. The boots are splendid & fit me as easy as gloves, but I wish the 10/6. pair had not been made so long. — Your thread & needle case I prize very much, as your handy work. The cap covers my head just right. Your canister of tea I am much obliged for: the tin was a little bulged in on one side. I find the collars answer better than I expected as on my present shirt I have two collar buttons in front. Thank you for sending me such an enormous supply. The neck ties are very neat — especially the narrow brown (?) & blue.

20th Aug: — I have had some compunctions of conscience lately from the fear that I was not doing right in going up to the gold fields, and I prayed that I might only do the will of God, and that obstacles

might be raised if I was acting inconsistently. A few days ago my mind was much exercised on this point, but latterly I seem to think that I am doing what is right. This money from the Shaws set me thinking: previous to Mr Shaw's offer of returning the loan I had no thought of the gold fields, beyond being interested in the way they would act in opening up South Eastern Africa. Subsequently I ^{found} that Mr Rottowley (a Congregational local Preacher at the Bay) was intending to go, and that he thought as many Christians as possible should go. This caused me to think that I could organise a small party of believers, and as I had seen the advertisement of the Spearmans (the sons) in the paper I hurried down for fear of their making any arrangements. The eldest, George, & the youngest, Joseph, are the ones whose wagons are hired, and the two of the four brothers I like the best. Joe is a very nice character - amiable, energetic, of good judgment & high Christian principle; I hardly know a fault in him as yet. Both the brothers speak Zulu well - Joe like a native; and both are as thoroughly acquainted with wagons & oxen as my Father is with the human frame. Mr Baker is a quiet, unimpulsive, and excepting now & then, a passionless man, but a steady equanimous temperament. He is a very well read man, self taught we think; a very fair geologist I should say, and up in every respect to mining. He remarked to his wife "Did she think that it possible that if there were a goldfield where others were going that he could remain at home?" Ralph Clapence is the most earnest Christian of the ^{party} ~~lot~~, and is known for trying to make use of every possible opportunity to speak a quiet word of Christ: he is a good Zulu linguist, and a thorough Colonist. I am the least useful of the 5, excepting the help that my money & endeavours have done to organise the expedition. - Our intention at present is to

- prospect only at first, and seek for alluvial gold in the primary case, then to search for a paying vein of metal in a quartz reef, sending home, if we can raise the means; for a proper quartz crushing mill or machine to cost perhaps £500. - I have no doubt repeated here some things that I mentioned in my last, but perhaps they may be interesting to you; but I have not said when we are starting. Well, we can do nothing in that way till the rains set in & the grass springs, which we expect in a fortnight or so - say the beginning of September, and that we shall start about the 15th of Sept: or a little later. We are taking 4 54 gallon Hogsheads for the purpose of floating the wagons across the flooded rivers, which take place from November, by turning the platform or what we call the "bed-plank" into pontoons. The casks will hold some of our stores till they are so wanted: and perhaps one or two will be required for holding water in case of our having to cross some waterless desert; but that I don't much anticipate or rather expect. - I have not heard from nor seen Mr Mc Larren (my successor) since I left Durban: Mr Allison is anxious to see him, and I can see ^{he is} not sorry that I am going. And that is one reason why I am restless: when feeling my inefficiency from not knowing the language and inability to do more, and that for the mere imparting of the simplest elements of instruction I am taking the whole large grant of £100, I consider I ought to let some more effective man work here. - Mr Mc Larren will doubtless take some of the services off Mr Allison's hands, and enable him consequently to turn his attention gratuitous to some other place. - Mr Allison thinks after all that he will be able to secure that 6,000 acre Farm (not

3000 Acres as I think I said before) through the broker Mr. Maritz becoming involved: his plan is only to lease it at present with right of purchase at 5/- an acre within 10 years. If I am successful at the gold field I should like to purchase it for a station, but in case of Mr. Allison's death, I don't know any one as yet who could manage it.

— There has been some little excitement in the Colony from gold in very minute quantities having been found in the Kuntwalume River, which is about 80 miles down the Coast, south from Durban, and near Mr. Wilder's Kafir Station which I visited in '63: but the idea is that it will not be more paying than the gold found in Wales & Scotland.

I enclose herein a letter (open) for Mrs. Thorburn, and a photograph of the 6 boys referred to in my letter to her, my best scholars, at least 4 are. Their names are at the back. David Fuzani is the son of an Induna or Chiefs' Councillor. — I shall try ~~to write~~ to purchase & send you a Mercury tomorrow, and inside will enclose an "occasional paper" of Mr. Allison's Society, please acknowledge the receipt of the two. In the Mercury you will see something about the gold fields — at all events on the 4th page about Mr. Chapman. The letter signed "Prospector" is mine. — I shall try to write tomorrow to Aunt Eliza & Aunt Marwick addressing the envelope to you; if not, this, I will next mail. —

From your ever affectionate Son,
A. Stephen Hobson.

P.S. You need not now write at all so often of course. I shall get a friend to get forward your letters up to me. — 21st I have forwarded the Mercury & the "occasional paper." —

No 84. Maritzburg, Natal; 7 September 1868. 18/1
Rec^d Oct. 24

W H
My dear Mother,

22/8. - I posted my letter No 83 and a newspaper to you yesterday, and now I feel inclined to jot down a few words ^{again} ~~more~~. -

I have just been going over the passage that I ~~thinking~~ of speaking from at the Gaol tomorrow - "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise" II Pet. 3.9 - and marking out the various references that I shall bring forward. May He help me to speak His words to the blessing of the hearers. -

I have also in a contemplative mood been casting my eye forward into the future for the next year or two, and I see nothing but a restless, changing, exciting & nomadic life for that time with dangers peradventure from wild beasts - for lions & hyenas are abundant up there - and possibly from men. What a need have I to put myself into God's keeping more than ever, and to seek His peace & confidence: may all I do be for Him and His work. - To protect myself from wild animals I also to procure meat I may say here that I possess a nice little double-barrelled smooth bore gun and a very handy small Colt's revolver with leather holster in perfect working order: that I am purchasing

130 pounds of lead for bullets, hundreds of caps, shot powder in proportion. I shall not want that quantity of lead all for myself, but some of my partners can take some or I can sell it ~~what~~ I don't want at a good profit to the Boers (= the Dutch). There is a splendid double barrelled rifle (sighted up to 2000 yds with accompaniments) for sale at a store here for only £16, but I can't afford it. All the 5 of us are taking guns, and 2 of us smooth bores - good for wild duck (of which there are abundance up there) and other small game that a rifle is not so applicable for, and the other 3 rifles I believe. — I think we may apprehend slightly a little bloodshedding as the Dutch are very jealous of the English going up there, and unless we go up all altogether in a strong party, both to show our earnestness of purpose & power to the natives, and to intimidate, as well as to protect our interests against the Boers, we may expect being assailed by the latter. — Mr Allison is taking a very great interest in this gold movement, and puts forth his opinions & advice, and makes numerous inquiries of my boys. He told me a good thing yesterday - that he ~~would~~ ^{will} forward a letter to my boys up there or rather who will be up there, to come & seek me out, and to come to me every month to take my letters for him & give to Mr Marenski, a German Missionary who lives at some little distance from them, and from whose station a post is despatched once every month. This will be a very nice opportunity of keeping up communication. — I in my own mind have an idea that this present movement of mine will lead me to the Zoutpansberg district (or to use the native designation to Baranabulana) eventually. One of my boys here now says - that his mother came

from a tribe where the tsetse (the dreadful fly) so abounds that they cannot possess cattle, and consequently live on mealies, amabele or Kafir corn &c. They obtain their wives not by paying cattle therefore, but by digging stone out of pits (which is quartz of course), hammering the stone till they can pick out the gold: this gold they take down to the Portuguese settlements at Delagoa Bay, and obtaining such goods as they can trade away with other tribes for wives. This has been done for a very long period, and, as Mr Allison suggests, in these heaps of stone, there is most likely enough quartz to employ a crushing mill very profitably for some time. ^{the name of this place is Musina} but how can we get the machinery there if oxen ^{or horses} are killed by the tsetse - well Mr Marenski says that donkeys are untouched, and if that fails the mill must be made in such small segments as to be carried by men similarly to the expeditions of Burton, Livingstone & Speke. ^{But} Asses would, if bred there, supply the natives also with meat & milk, Mr Damas affirming that the flesh of young zebra (having eaten it) makes juicy meat. Mr Damas is a French Protestant Missionary, a colleague of Mr Gillard, but of far longer standing, having been in the Basuto Mission between 20 & 30 years. - The profits of this enterprise, if it proves practical & feasible, I should like to apply to the formation and support of a Baramabulana Mission. -

2nd Sept: I am sorry I have not before taken up my pen: a day or two after writing the foregoing I received the following letters from Braithwaite Road - My Father's of 8 & 9 July acknowledging 4 of my letters and a draft for £10, with interesting remarks. I am ashamed that I have not made you another

remittance out of the £230 I received from the Shaws, but this expedition demands and finds such a ready outlet that I have postponed from mail to mail. This is how the £230 has gone - to the 2 Spearmans - my $\frac{1}{2}$ share of the Company's wagon (one half paid ^{now} & the other half at the expiration of the twelvemonth) £15: my $\frac{1}{2}$ payment of my own wagon hired from them £75 (the other half as above): loan to the Company to buy stores & tools £70. I did this because goods were going up in price when I was at the Bay: my share (£25) is to come out of this, and the balance (£45) I buy my load with for my wagon - 2 Tons of sugar @ £18 say £20 = £40: this sugar I expect to sell at Potchefstroom to Mr. Reid (the chief merchant there) for £56 a ton, but ^{likely} more £80 or even £100 a ton as sugar is selling up there at 2/6 - half a crown - a pound; I buy at the mill for two pence. I buy wool with the proceeds to be forwarded to H. Brooks & Co, Maritzburg, who agree to advance me $\frac{3}{4}$ of the value when they receive it. This provides for my liability of £75 due September '69. I may take half the sugar on to the diggings. Loan to Mr. Baker £30 - I did this because the Copper mining shares he wishes to sell are hard to dispose of at present, and I saw it was so necessary almost to secure his copartnership on account of his knowledge & experience. His wife has a small school by which she supports herself at Lydricham, & 2 daughters. To Mr. Pincent transfer dues on the 150 Acres near Verulam £11. A double barrel gun (smooth bore) £8. - Waterproof coat £2.5.0. William Dutton taking charge of the school in my absence £1.5.0. 3 Waterproof sheets 30/- Lead for shooting £2.10.0. A portion of this will be refunded by the Company, and I paid for it at once as Mr. Godfrey wanted ^{money} to buy some clothes that were being sold very cheap at a clearance sale in a store there. Charges on chest per

[2084 2000]

"Ocean Dart" a little under £3 (viz: 18/2 being 6% on £20 Custom dues £1.6.6, Freight £1.1.0, boat for landing the chest 1/6. Transport to Maritzburg 3/- Commisⁿ to David Lumsden 7.9) - 3 strong linen (coloured) shirts 15/- 5 yds Mole skin very strong & good bought at the clearance sale 15/- for two pairs trousers @ 3/- usually 4/- to 4/6 per yard. Strong thick coarse jumper 6/3 Rent to Mr Allison 20/- Wages to Marase 5/- This food 3/- Bus up down with food 17/6. Post Office order to Morgan & Chase £1.0.0 for tracts pamphlets & small books for distribution loan at the Diggings. &c &c. Then I expect to sell my two horses for £8 - £3.5 & £5. Two shares in the Permanent Building Assocⁿ £8 or each £4. one debt £2.10.0. - Truter will pay me £5 in October (the 1st) Mr Shaw £2. Mr Blundy, Rent due in November £12.10. My Furniture £4 (viz: Chest of Drawers perhaps £3. Round table with 4 turned stickwood legs say 15/- 3 cranky chairs 3/- ea: 9/- which deducting Auction commission equals about £4) out of which I have to pay for revolver £3. -

I wrote to Mr John Ireland 2 days ago asking him to be my Executor, but I have not received an answer: he would also be my Agent, receiving & paying monies &c. He is an outfitter & clothier, a Christian man but timid, of good business habits, thoroughly honorable, prompt & precise. His wife is a nice woman, & an excellent mother to 4 good children. Mr Ireland's age is I should say something over 30. - They are very kind to me, and press me to come in to tea whenever I like.

Now for your letter, so long, so delightful & comforting: it was commenced at Leamington June 15 & concluded at Birmingham July 9. Its number is 9. - The extracts from the accounts of Robert are all very interesting. I am naturally pleased that he some extent agrees with me on Baptism, and I am thankful at the spirit you & my Father regard our views. Thanks for all your remarks on bathing. There are 2 boxes of 15 Collars - the rest are 14 1/2: as I said in my last, from having 2 buttons on the shirt collar bands the 15s do very well & also the 14 1/2. - I shall try to send you by all means £10 before I go from here, leaving the balance (£15) to be remitted by my Agent, who will be Mr Ireland.

1 1/2 in over 24 hours and 5 1/2 inches in another 24.

112 inches fell in 69 hours (include inches!)
The papers (your packet & Aunt Eliza's packet) I was glad to receive, and amongst them the Missionary Chronicle. — Many thanks again for all your, and dear Lissie's presents to me in the Chest. Everything turns out well. Aunt Eliza and Aunt Marmock I have often thought of through their gifts. —

I am sorry to say the Colony has suffered severely lately through a disastrous flood, which has broken down several bridges. ^{The former bridge just below my coffee plantation cost £17.00.00} A flood in August (end of winter) has never been known in Natal before. The rain lasted 3 days & 3 nights, and several houses have fallen down in this town & 200 oxen killed by the lightning & cold rain ^{especially the 1st day} that grazed on the Town Lands. — I have not heard from my Partners whether they have sustained any loss. —

4/9. — I am getting anxious to go. I am convinced I should have had to leave on any condition almost. Being with Kafirs from 10 in the morning till 8 or 9 at night is too much for me. Unfortunately a Kafir gives off a very strong scent especially when perspiring, and some of my boys even when quiet smell like old putrifying sores that I have met with in hospitals: that I can't account for it altogether. Of course they are not so clean as they might be — indeed as a rule Kafir think dirty clothes are warmer than clean ones, and cold they fear — tho' I do allow them soap now & then. I should think I have a headache once or twice a week, a thing unknown to me before I came to Maritzburg. It is only since I came to live in this house that I had anything to do with the evening school, but there are 8 or 9 who work during the day and immediately after their supper come to the schoolroom to write, which they are ardently striving to learn. Others also flock in whose work terminates at 6 o'clock bringing their ^{ready} books with them, and as Mr Albion does not light the Chapel till 8 o'clock they swarm into my schoolroom to enjoy my lamp which I lend them, which very soon causes a strong, heavy, close scent to arise even

with open windows - fancy what it must be in summer!! It would cause you soon to faint or - to vomit. - I am sorry to write these particulars, but they explain my position. The education my nose received in Chinese towns stands in good service, but my appetite suffers. In fact I am getting miserable: the confinement, the little exercise, the solitariness (in this City) make life rather dull - but stay, I am beginning to murmur: let me compare my position even with many in this Town who are again better off than thousands in their own position in England. But I don't think I am honorable in taking £100 a year for setting 30 to 50 copies a day simply, and I am excessively glad that my conscience is tender, for honesty and modesty are said to be almost unknown in this Colony. -

I am glad to report favorably on Mr Waterhouse. He is plain in appearance & manners, but he seems to every one to be one that will wear well. His sermons are thoughtful (consequently thought-engendering) earnest, simple and Christian, with sentiment to make them interesting as well as profitable, mixing new with old. He has one fault - celibacy, and another - long hair. The people are pleased with him having given him a hearty reception (for Maritzburg) and, strange to say - he is pleased with them. He likes the pulpit, because it is not a pulpit but a platform: he admires the Chapel & its cleanliness (it has just been painted); and he appears determined to be cheerful & hearty, so here's an hurrah to him. Letting rather jocularly perceive over my troubles and bachelorhood. But this amuses me so - the peculiarities of Marasi, my servant. He hides ~~my~~ (apparently) my night clothes under a distant cushion instead of under my pillow: always omits putting the knife, or salt or butter or fork on the table at meals, though he has been a servant before, at Mr Tisick's among other places - something almost always is missing; and puts things away so securely in such places

* This was Mr. Hurdock's Kafir, with the arm and daughter

that I can't find them, and is frequently absent when wanted. * He seems born unlucky, if I may use that expression which is not a favorite with me, but more correctly his judgment differs from mine: and he suffers from absent mindedness. Talking of variety of judgment, what would you think of a Kafir putting a wheel barrow, load as well, on to the top of his head & carrying it so: he simply was unacquainted with the use of the wheel. Or again, of a Kafir boiling smoothing-irons to make them hot, which of course is one way of arriving at the effect desired, but simply not the way we adopt who use starched shirts - all arising from a difference of judgment. It is no good losing your temper over these annoyances - let laughter take its place. How would a young lady my Father knows (B. C.) bear these trifles? Not well I take it. - Cross this out.

Mr. Shortburn's tin box case is very profitable useful & ornamental: Mr. Allison was admiring it this morning. I shall leave this space below to close in I think. I apologize for the odd way I put in my sentences - in a jumble, disconnected style - being always in a hurry. I cannot patiently wait to insert my thoughts in their places decorously. So "gue naam" = Dutch for good evening: "hamba kahle" in Zulu = go gently, and your response should be "sala kahle" = remain gently, but as you don't know it I'll say it for you: the last syllable "hle" is pronounced almost similar to the Welsh double l, (ll) as in llewellyn, or in other words, a strong aspirate on the l. -

7/9. - Mr. McFarren came up from the Bay in the Bus on Saturday afternoon - this is Monday morning - and he goes down again to-morrow, having come up on a visit of inspection. I have not seen much of him as Mr. Allison has kept him very close (being I can see much taken with him), and has not asked me in to any meal with him as yet. He did rather a curious thing on Saturday

Marasi is an earnest Christian - he said this evening that the Bible was now his father.

night. He was showing Mr McFarren over the house, and when he came to the door (rarely opened) which connects my bedroom with his passage, he called out "are you in bed?" (it was only 8 o'clock), I answered "no"; so he opened the door and said to Mr McFarren "this is the dining room", then afterwards to me, "here is Mr McFarren", whom I was very surprised to see and at the same time quite glad. But I thought it curious to speak of my bedroom - which I rented of him - as his dining room, because it was so originally.

- I am afraid that what I have written in the first part of my letter about a scrimmage with the Boers may alarm you, but there is not much necessity for you to be so, as the danger is very slight.

Mr Ireland has consented to be my Executor if I can find no one better, and I am going to ask Mr Vick to be Co-executor, as Mr I. courts enquiry.

I had a happy time at the Tronk (Dutch for Jail)
yesterday morning. I spoke about the word "blessed".

No more till the next fortnight from

Your ever affectionate son,
D. S. Hobson.

Address me as before - Mr Ireland will go to the Post
for my letters & then despatch them to me. - There is
nothing ^{like} speaking a word for Christ & working for him
to make a man happy.

The scent I referred to as proceeding from Kafirs is
most of it natural & physical, though no doubt a good
deal of it or a portion of it could be removed by soap
& water: but how they can afford to buy soap?

19/1

No 85. Maritzburg, Natal, 12 September '68.

Rec? Jan. 15. '69 —

My dear Father,

As there is a mail by the "Prince Alfred" the postage of which is only 4d I send you a few letters that I have received from some of my correspondents which may be interesting to you: viz: 1 from Mr. J. H. Larrigan my successor, and 2 from Mr. Geo. Spearman Junior in reference to our expedition.

Mr. Visick has consented this morning (when I asked him) to become my second Executor, so next week I shall draw out my Will.

I was enabled this morning to make a present of a Dutch New Testament to a Dutchman that is starting today for Potchefstroom with a load of yellow ^{wood} plank. I asked him if he had a Bible amongst his things, and he laughed & said "what did he want with a Bible"? I asked again "did he not like to read when he was outspanned this cattle grazing" - oh no! he sang songs. However he was very pleased when this Will^m Duntow I made him a present of a Testament, writing his ^{name} in it - S. H. Brinkhuisen, and asking me

to write mine which I did. - We must
watch for every opportunity, and be as vigi-
lant & ready to assail Satan's Kingdom as
he is to assail our Lords.

Your ever affectionate Son,
Stephen Hobson

1912

Sydenham
August 25th

Mr. Hobson,

Dear Sir,

My husband has given me the office of secretary for the house, as he is busily engaged stitching away at canvas for a tent, which I cannot assist him with being somewhat too stiff for my fingers, he could not succeed in getting a bell-tent either new or old in Durban so he thought it would be best not to delay but purchase canvas & make one. We duly received your letter of the 21st Inst. & the parties here are agreed that you had better secure the lead for shooting your spoke.

As regards the quicksilver, Mr. Reynolds had given the selling of it to Mr. Duck, & he has promised as much as may be required.

Geo told you he had procured a
boat, but as the one you spoke of
is so cheap he thinks you may
as well purchase it also, as two
will always be useful.

Joe has not yet arrived but we
expect him on Friday or Saturday.

Have you heard the rumour of
Mose's death? There was a
paragraph in the Mercury of Saturday
stating that the chief was dead
& his people were fighting for
the choice of a successor &
consequently all on the dippings
had returned to the Free States
it made some people look blue
& shrug their shoulders, but Geo
thinks it will not at all affect
parties about to start. all
differences will soon probably
be settled in a few weeks.

There are a good number
of people preparing to start
from this Victoria County

so you will most probably have
company on the route.

He wants to purchase 5 good
trained & inoculated bayard
Lulu cattle if you should know
of any for sale in good condition
He would pay cash for them.

Having nothing more to communicate
I will close by subscribing
myself

Yours truly
Wm. J. Spearman

1913

Sydenham,

Augst 21st

Mr Hobson

Dear Sir,

I received both
 your letter on the 19th; I
 fear you must think I am
 forgetting my promise to
 write & report progress &c,
 but I wanted to get a talk
 with Mr Clarence before doing
 so: he had sent word he would
 go, & appointed meetings at
 Mr Baker's, but did not
 keep his appointment till
 last evening, when we all
 met at Mr B's & the
 delay was rather favourable

than not, as we discussed
the contents of your letter
at the same time, As regards
the quartz crusher we thank
you for your kind ~~offer~~ offer
but decline to accept it,
for the following reasons,
neither Mr. B. Ralph, or I,
feel that we can afford
to risk more than £50
each, unless sure of a
return, the £45 would only
buy a small one, & if the
~~quantity~~ proves rich &
plentiful we can easily
send for a good one when
wanted, & Mr. Baker inclines
to think we may very

probably find alluvial
digging & then it will
not be required; but if
not his plan is to take
up with us a small one,
costing say, £10 to crush
the richest of the quartz
& stack the other till a
good machine can be got
up. We have bought nearly
everything for commissariat
& tools & shall most probably
complete our purchases
tomorrow when all are
to land. I will send you
a list of goods & prices,
I think you will find them
reasonable. I attended a

most instructive & entertaining
lecture given by Mr O Cato on
the gold fields on the
3rd. Just he speaks most
confidently with respect
to the certainty of finding
the precious metal.
We think it will be best
to delay procuring the
work you spoke of till
the last to see how
funds run out. If you
have not yet secured
the watch you mention
do not as I have got one
I have not yet procured a
sent they are very scarce
I think we shall have to make
one. Yours Truly C. Spearman W.

19/4

St Albans

24 August 1868

Dear Mr Hobson

Your favours of the 14th & yesterday's date came duly to hand. It was indeed cheering to read yours of the 14th. It must be a continual source of comfort to you to see such immediate fruit of your labour & a stimulant to further exertion in whatever sphere you are placed. I am indeed sorry you are leaving them as you are instrumental in doing so much good. Yet I trust that our Heavenly Father will will find plenty of work for you to do at the diggings far more profitable than acquiring earthly riches. There is a band of stout hearted Christians leaving Verulam. I mean Mr Todd's party ^{many} I am sure will nobly host there

~~Colors~~ Colors the Banner of
the cross If you could get
in company with them it would
make your trip much more
comfortable & pleasant for yourself
Their party is made up but you
could travel in company if you
wished it I think I will endeavor
now to get a few days holiday
about the end of this month
& then I shall come & see you
in this matter Thanks for your
offer to meet me at the bus
which I will thankfull accept
& will write to let you know
by what Bus I leave here
I am rather anxious to take
your place but would like
to feel more fully that it is
Gods way not mine I trust
you have prayed much for your
successor

In great haste
Yours faithfully
J. M. Laren

20/11

No 86. Maritzburg, Natal; 24th September
1868.

W "Perfect love casteth out fear."

Rec^d Nov-7

My dear Father,

15/9. - The intermediate mail, as some call it, came in on the 9th but brought nothing for me. I somehow thought that I should have had an acknowledgement of my letters of 8th & 10th June (nos 77 & 78) particularly the last named (78), as it contained the draft for Mr Allison's money, but I suppose I may expect it on the 23rd of this month. -

I wrote you on the 12th inst (no 85) a few lines enclosing 3 letters (per sailing ship "Prince Alfred," Capt. Airth) that I thought might interest you: two of them relative to our gold seeking expedition from Geo: Spearman's hole from Mr Mc Laren. The postage is only 4^d.

I heard from Mr Baker this morning, and he mentions the 24th as the probable date of starting from Lydricham; so I have written down for certain information and if the above is confirmed, I think of leaving here on the 21st (Monday) for Lydricham on a horse that I want to sell there. I despatched a Kafir this morning to Clarendon for my two horses - "Claude" I shall sell at the auction sale on Saturday and ride down to the Bay on the other. - I think we shall find Mr Baker's services extremely useful, in fact without him I should feel as in a ship without a compass. His geological & mining experiences will definitely direct us, and his being

the neophytes at exploring (having tracked through the Australian forests alone) causes me to put much confidence in them. It was who greatly made the Russia Copper mines so available. Valuable: this was an enterprise started by the Lydrubaw people, in a district near Adany Hok's Country, but whether it is or out of the colony I cannot say, and it was by Mr. Baker's advice that the drive was made, which led to the lode. One of the shoreholders (Benjⁿ Crowder) is now trying to sell the mine to English capitalists. - I have bought two maps of the routes to the gold fields at 4/- apiece - one of which I shall forward by this mail. - The Natal route is unquestionably the best - I might almost say the only one, though the Port Elizabeth people say the reverse for their interest.

- Mr. Allison has at last and after all secured the Dutchman's farm. His lease is for six years, at a rental of £87. 10. 0 p annum, and with right of purchase at expiry of lease at £2,500. The total of it is 5,600 acres; it has 5 Tenements on it, one (which will be the Mission house) in pretty good order with fine orchard, and round the houses a splendid vine that bore last year 500 bunches of heavy pot grapes: abundance of water for irrigating purposes and of wood. This will be the 14th M^o A. says of his stations: I will mark them on the Map I send you in rotation in figures in blue ink if I can get any. - Please look out for Mosunia. (should be written Musunia), Karamapulana and Joutfaustberg which are one above another to the right of the intersection of degrees 22 lat: and 30 long: This is where my boys come from, and where I want to get. I will also mark Clarendon for you; also Truher's farms. -

- I think of buying an ounce bottle of Quinine (here costing 16/6) and two small bottles of Chlorodyne. Also 6 bottles of the best brandy - Hennessy's battle axe brand, and two bottles of Scotch whisky for colds. - I obtained yesterday in barter for my two shares of the Natal Permanent Building Loan and Investment Association (it requires patience to read his long title) 36 yards of fine strong warm black blanket - commonly called black baze - of two yards width @ 4/6 p yard - altogether £8. 2. 0. My boys say that for 2 yards length of this I can get a year old ox or beast, and for 4 yards a cow or calf, so you see we shall be well off for meat. This is nice as it has not required the outlay of Cash. - Tomorrow I shall apply to the Magistrate for an order on the Magazine for 10 lbs Powder (6 fine & 4 coarse) and 8 boxes Caps - 250 Caps in each box. Gunpowder is contraband here on account of the large black population. - The above will cost £2. 15. 0.

17th September. - This day I have signed my Will (a copy of which I now enclose next mail another in case this should be lost). You will see I have followed here my Sister's suggestion and example, which I hope you will not think wrong of me. I have lodged my will in sealed envelope with my chief Executor Mr. Ireland. He very much objected yesterday to the last clause - leaving him £10 - but I thought of all the trouble he would have in case of my decease, and considered it right to do so. Mr. Tisick drew out the draft of the Will which I copied. I consider it explicit, concise and brief - 3 very good qualities. - I also signed my General Power of Attorney

in favor of Mr John Ireland (my Executor) by which he is enabled to receive my pay monies, and in fact act as my general Agent.

My two horses arrived from the farm this evening: "Claude" is so fat and fresh that I shall try to sell him tomorrow privately for £5. I take the other one down to the Bay, because he is a Coast horse & does not seem to thrive on up country grass (a strange thing), and because I can get more money for him there. - I gave the Kafir (Adam Mochapi) who sometimes comes to my school, 2/- for his job - walking 36 miles, catching the horses, and riding them here with no saddle but an old gunny bag, which occupied him 3 days, and he appeared satisfied: he says he is sore with riding, and that "Claude" carried him beautifully. I never rode a horse with an easier canter. - I succeeded in obtaining the powder yesterday: it cost with the caps (they only allowed me 1500) £2.6.6 as I did not buy the finest powder - the six lbs cost 4/3 each: the coarse 2/3 and the caps 2/- & 2.50. -

I have bought 4 yards of mosquito netting @ 6/- yard good width, and Mr Allison recommends me to take some Tartar Emetic, which he has found very useful in his long experience amongst Kafir - he has given me his directions, and I expect to get many kids & goats for my medical services.

Sydneyham, 24th Sept. - I arrived here on the evening of the 22nd. I rode thro' leaving Maritzburg at 5 o'clock. - Mr Visick kindly came as far as Mys Dorns (8 miles from Maritzburg) with me. I was very sore & tired when I arrived at Mr

Spearman's house as my horse was very
 tired, which was occasioned by his just coming
 off the veldt, and the sudden change from grass
 food to forage & mealies is not good for a horse.
 The next morning after I felt all right, only
 a very little stiff but much as if I had come
 off a 50 miles ride. — I find the affairs
 of our expedition in a good & forward state:
 one wagon with the bulk of the stores has al-
 ready gone up 20 miles with the most of the
 oxen to give ^{them} grazing where there is excellent
 grass — better than about here but ticks. The
 stores have been ^{well} bought, and better than on the
 list I sent you — I mean better as regards
 quantities. We have just had a meeting
 (your servant in the chair) and decided several
 things — the concluding meeting comes off to-
 morrow night, and we think of starting on the
 29th or 30th (Tuesday or Wednesday).

Yesterday ~~letter~~ I received letters from home
 (forwarded by Mr Allison from Maritzburg)
 yours from Aberystwith and No 10 from
 my Mother of Aug: 8 lost dated, and Sissie's
 and Aunt Eliza's of Aug: 6 also from Aberys-
 with, which I was glad to receive. —

The Case for Mr Allison is lying at the Point
 in the Queen's Warehouse, and I shall go to-
 morrow to pay the dues & get it up to Durban.

I have sent up to Mr Allison today Mother's
 list of things, which will give great satisfac-
 tion no doubt. I am very sorry Mother had
 so much trouble about the Agent, Mr Hill; if
 I had foreseen it, I ^{have} would ^{have} mentioned the name.
 I am sorry exceedingly thro' my mistake.

M^{rs} Harrison will get a "blue" instead of a black silk dress. — I am in rather a hurry now & will answer these letters more fully in my next and — last one from Natal for a long time.

I think the share of each in this expedition for cost of stores will amount to only £18 apiece, and £2 each more will be paid to a general fund for further purchases above at Port-
Lefebvre and at the diggings.

No more now

Your affectionate son,
R. S. Hobson.

21/1

Sydenham, near Durban
Natal; 10th October 1868.

Rec^d. Sect^y

My dear Parents,

This is my last letter to you from Natal for a length of time - how long I cannot say, certainly one year. - Tomorrow (~~Monday~~) is our last day here. Joe Spearman has just started with our other wagon, and to night will reach the first wagon, which with our cattle ~~has~~ been waiting for us during the last ^{fort} night. - Ralph Clarence is going to Maritzburg by the Bus on Tuesday, George Spearman is riding up on horseback on Monday to the wagons which will be some 14 miles from here, I am going with a friend (Tom Wheeler) who is starting for

Maritzburg on Monday morning with
his buck-wagon; I don't know how
Baker is going: we shall all join at
Maritzburg where we stay some 24 hours
(say from Wednesday to Thursday), get
up on to the top of the Town Hill on
Thursday night and spend Sunday
at Mooi River with an old Lydrumham
friend - Frank Harvey - this is all
"weather permitting" - And Sunday
after that in the Free State.

The Company has had its photograph
taken, and I enclose one for you.

The middle one sitting is Mr Baker,
the one to his left hand is myself, ~~the~~
and next me ~~with his legs resting~~ ^{against} the
piano is ^{George} Joe Spearman; on Mr Baker's other
side is Ralph Clarence, and the outside
one is ^{Joe} George Spearman. (The first photo: was taken as first
and I forgot the alteration made
for this present one.)

We have been vexatiously delayed here
from two causes - ~~the~~ waiting for our casting
castings for the little quartz crusher we
are taking with us, and Baker's slowness
in paying up his share of money: he still

owes the Company £10.13, and I hope it will be paid today. — We are all very much hoping to have a new Partner in a man much liked and esteemed at Sydneyham for his open unob-
^{size}
~~strutious~~ Christian character: he is called Kemworthy. Geo. Spearman & I are going down to his house tonight to see if he is really going. He will leave a wife & two little children. He has been a successful miner at Australia having acquired £2000 there, of which he lost a great deal by a flood that washed his homestead away, upon which he came away here with £700 which he has nearly all lost by inexperience in cattle. His age I suppose is 35. —

I am taking with me in my Wagon to trade the following goods:—

	lbs	cwt	gr	lbs	about	£
13 Bags Sugar	2002	or	17. 3.	14 @ 19/-	17.	
36 White Cotton Blankets @ 4/10				14 @ 19/-	8.	
5 pes Salempore (Blue thin Calico)				2 1/-	5. 5-	
10 Black Wool Blankets				8/6	4. 5-	
10 Pairs White Cotton Sheets				5/-	2. 10	
11½ lbs Black Beads				1/6	17. 3	
12½ " White Beads				1/10	1. 2. 11	
					39. 5. 2	

28 lbs Thin Steel Wire @ 1/2	39. 5. 2
1 bundle Thin Brass Wire	1. 12. 0.
36 yds Black Blanketing 2 yds wide @ 4/6	10. 0
also 4 dozen tinder boxes with steels & flints @ 3/8	8. 2. 0
1 Double Gun	49. 10. 2
1 Gun - 1 pair rifle barrels with 1 pair smooth barrels Sappurte ^{es}	8.
13 whip sticks	1. 2. 6
	<u>66. 12. 8</u>

The underwritten is a list of some of our stores

	lbs	
2 Bags Flour 55/- 30/-	300	4. 5. 0
1 --- Coffee	100	3. 5. 0
1 Box Tea (very good) 3/6	20	3. 10. 0
2 1/2 Bags Salt - 1 coarse 1 fine	224	14. 0
3 Boxes Candles 4/- 1/2	75	4. 5. 4
2 --- Soap 14/- 15/-	112	1. 9. 0
1 --- Raisins 7/-	60	1. 15. 0
3 Bags Sugar 20/- per cwt	472	4. 4. 3
1 --- --- (Clarence's)	130?	
Hams & Bacon 7/-	100	2. 17. 9
Tin lined Case		4. 0
1 doz: Shovels Shovels		1. 16. 0
Prospecting Pan (Strong tin)		4. 0
Kettle (wrought iron) and 28 lbs Shot		17. 6
Another bag of Shot 28 lbs		
Canvass, home Needles for Bell Tent		4. 1. 3
2 Deal planks		4. 3
4 Sacks Biscuits (English, very good)	343	4. 10. 3

1. Tin of Preserved Vegetables	lbs 15	21/2
excellent for Soup - French Preparation a fineful goes a long way.		15.0
1 Muid Beans black	180	15.5
5 lbs Soda $\frac{3}{4}$ Tartaric Acid $\frac{5}{6}$ Mustard $\frac{4}{5}$		12.10
4. Pepper $\frac{3}{4}$ Cayenne $\frac{2}{5}$ Matches $\frac{4}{5}$		9.4
		about £42.0.0

Each man 10 lbs Gunpowder & 2000 Caps which
has been put into an iron oil tin with lid & padlock
8 pieces of firearms amongst us, making 24 barrels
Sausage machine for cutting up meat 17.6

11 lbs Quicksilver 60/- 12 picks £4.10.0 6 gads 9/-
2 lanterns ea: $\frac{5}{6}$ 2 3 legged Pots ea: 5/-
Belloirs $\frac{3}{6}$ Medicine 1 cask Pickled Pork $\frac{9}{4}$ @ 6/-
1 doz: Brandy @ $\frac{3}{6}$ Buck meat we shall shoot on
the road in heaps over the Mountains - thousands
of Blisks, wildebeests, springboks, kartebeests &c
Crasher Bretort £11.6.6 $\frac{1}{2}$ and sundry other things.

Our Bell tent is a fine, capacious, well-made affair,
and will be our home on wet days & nights when trekking
and when we camped at the diggings. - I bought today
few blue backs, which is the currency in the Free State
& Transvaal, for purchasing food &c up there; the price
of the one pound notes was 7/- apiece only, thus obtaining
£10 for £3.10.0; you see what poor credit these Dutch
Government have. -

The Mail came in today, and to my surprise
I learn that it is going out tomorrow - the paper
said not till the 15th, that is 5 days hence. I am
sorry that you will not hear from me this fortnight
as you would be anxious to know about my starting.

I have enjoyed excellent health since leaving
Mauritzburg: the ride down in the first instance did
me good by shaking me up well, the benefit of which
I felt before going to bed that night. I think the
absence from that close strong scent of the Kafirs
I described to you before for 6 or 7 hours a day has

had a great deal of effect in improving me. Mrs. Spearman is a poor hand in domestic matters - I doubt if you ^{could} touch or look at ^{some of} the food she puts out on to the table sometimes, but I have had plenty of mooring about fresh air, so that I generally go to bed tired & enjoy a fair appetite.

Moor River, 40 miles above Maritzburg 490 from Lydenham - 25th October. - Here we are - on our way to the Gold Diggings. I am writing this on my chest in my wagon or rather George's - a bright hot sunny day, quite a change to the continued wet & rain we had from Lydenham to Maritzburg, and also to the shivering extraordinary cold from Maritzburg here.

Our tent is pitched close by: it was a great comfort to us coming up on the Bay Road, as whenever we outspanned the rain came on, we were soon under its pleasant shelter, and tho' George (Spearman) and I slept on the wet ground, we never caught cold. I now sleep in my wagon, where I am very comfortable. It will still be more so when we are ^{even} better arrayed here in our proper ^{new} grooves. - I have ^{been} cropping the heads of the Company, and as usual on such journeys, as ours, have cut unceremoniously close; in fact I have made Joe look like a convict, and he has made me appear only a little better - but the comfort!!! a wash in the river all over with soap and pass the hand over the head, and the toilette is complete. - We all get on very pleasantly: Mr. Baker has satisfied us all, but I had to drive him (no one else would do it) to a settlement. We have morning ^{family} prayers regularly in the tent, and today we are passing half a day in baking bread, boiling a large piece of salt beef, arranging our wagons

fitting with bags round the sides to put constant ^{them} requisites in, such as powder & shot flasks, bullets, traps, squiddles & soap, hair brushes (if wanted) and books &c. &c. - I am glad to say I succeeded in obtaining some more Kafir goods or truck as it is called here - namely, 100 pairs of Cotton sheets @ 5/6 & 5/9 per pair for £28, by giving a power of attorney to mortgage my 150 Acres near Terblam, and I left my little deeds as the security. Credit is given me for four months, and after that (29 Feb) interest at 10% runs on the amount. The O/A cost me 3 pence. I am told that Kafir sheets are much liked up there - more than Cotton blankets - so I hope to obtain some ivory & feathers (ostrich) which I shall fetch in Maritzburg from £20 to 25 a lb. -

I have directed Mr. Blandy to remit you my next rent (due in 6 days) viz: £12.10.0 which I hope you will receive. Mr. Ireland will remit you £5 to 8 also shortly, I expect. I will make out a new A/c. by & by to show you how we stand. Mrs. Allison was perfectly delighted with the things you have sent out, and both she & Mr. Allison repeated several times their thanks for the trouble you undertook & the labour you performed for them. Mr. Allison was much struck with the good quality of every thing, their strength, texture, patterns & weight, and so beautifully packed - she believed them that there were some persons at my home, who could just pack well. Mr. Kerrison was much disappointed at the silk being blue, but she is selling it to a rich woman (Mr. Shepetone) for £3.10.0. I charge her only £2.11.6 which she will pay Mr. Visick in instalments of 5/- or 10/- as she can. She and Mr. Allison were infatuated with the silk & I think especially the trimmings. I forgot to say Mr. Allison has paid me the charges &c.

you incurred, and so I will put them down in our new life. —

Nature looks lovely now - all the hills are covered with the new spring grass, richly green, and the temperature is splendid with a fresh breeze this morning. The Drakensberg was covered with snow - the last 2 or 3 days, and it has excited crisis of admiration as we passed along: this has accounted for the cold we have been having, but today I expect will cause it to disappear.

Remember in the carte de visite that the tall ~~fat~~ man next me standing outside is George Spearman aged 29 and that Joseph Spearman is the outside one on the other side next to Ralph Clarence - the age of these two is about the ~~side~~ same I should think - say 23. Ralph is engaged to Mr. Baker's eldest daughter who is 18.

Kenworthy could not go with us, as he could not raise enough money. We are all sorry Kenworthy could not go.

Many thanks for your No 11 of 23rd August. All the numerous varied extracts from Robert's letters that you so kindly made for me were most interesting. Anything regarding China is very acceptable to me. - Mr. Ireland will send me your letters & papers to Potchefstroom, (I hope you have received the map I sent you on the 22nd Sept.) and we shall try to send Kafir down there. Potchefstroom we hope to reach in 3 or 4 weeks and that is hardly half way; it is over 400 ^{miles} from Maitzberg.

I am not thinking at all or much of obtaining gold but from I hear, I think there is every probability of our obtaining some or a good deal. Mauch is a thoroughly reliable man, and he was the discoverer. There are two Natal parties of 7 men each ahead of us slightly, and 3 behind us. I reckon over 50 men are on their way now.

With much love to you all, I remain

Your ever affectionate son, Ralphus Hobson.

No 88.

Harrismith, Orange Free State,

31st October 1868.

Rec^d Feb. 8. 1869

My dear Mother,

No 87 of 24/10

I posted my last letter to you from Natal at Kooi River drift on the 24th of this month if I remember correctly, and now I write to you from another country. We reckon to be now 210 miles only from Durban, and therefore have traversed but one fifth of our long journey, and have spent 10¹/₂ days in travelling from Maritzburg here 160 miles distant, making an average of about 16 miles a day, which we shall not try to exceed being quite satisfied with it. Our usual course is to rise about 5¹/₂^{or 6} or earlier, and if the cattle are at hand ~~to inspan~~ ^{to inspan} (if we let them run all night) to inspan and trek on at once, but if we think they are at a distance I expect some time will elapse before they ~~come up~~ ^{come up} two Kapis will drive them up to the wagons, we tell the other Kapis to cook the Kettle & make coffee, very frequently, taking some biscuit or bread & butter (should we have any of either) till our bullocks arrive; we then make our morning trek, continuing for 3 or 3¹/₂ hours making 7 to 8 miles according to the nature of the roads & the country, and the temperature of the atmosphere; then we pitch our tent, choosing our outspanning place near good grass & water, and the 3 Kapis set to work fetching water & making a fire, when we soon have breakfast. Our coffee kettle is a famous large institution, having a very broad bottom & being often, it cooks very soon. The Kapis put in more water than we need as he has

To wash up the plates &c.: we don't make our coffee in a separate pot as you do in refined Dover-particular England but simply pour the coffee into the kettle stirring it up with a blazing stick to clear kettle it. In our enamelled frying pan we lay a dozen rasters of bacon if we have nothing else, and, after giving thanks to our Heavenly Father, set to work eating with hungry appetites in various attitudes - some reclining, some sitting cross-legged, tailor-wise, or another on an empty candle box. We rest at this time of the day for 6 hours or so, spanning in about 4^{PM} and making another trek of the same length as the morning. If the day is cloudy & without heat, and the moon be bright, we make 3 short treks a day, making the third & longest trek in the evening, when the cattle always do their best, sometimes going on to 11½ at night. We always continue our social prayer morning & evening. I am glad to say. Our meal times vary, sometimes we have 3 meals and at other times only 2 meals a day, going then 7 and 8 hours without food, on which occasions we generally enjoy the animal exercise of eating. -

This is Saturday afternoon, and we are thinking of spending our Sunday here, but it seems so desolate & bare of grass all round that we are rather alarmed about our ozen - however it is turning out better than it looks, though we are still inclined to trek out this evening to a place called Riet Spruit, where the grass is said to be better - this is 6 miles distant. Ralph Clarence & I have been here before but the rest of our Company as strangers are calling ^{the town} it all sorts of bad

names, being disgusted with it. We have just finished our eating (I can hardly call it a dinner), and Joe Spearman & Baker have gone off with Lou Putterill (an inhabitant) duck shooting on the Milge River, but to day like yesterday is made unpleasant by a strong wind blowing dry that, so that George Spearman & I prefer remaining at home, while Ralph is engaged in the tent putting on his best toggery for visiting. - Some of our party went out yesterday on a sporting walk & brought back 6 wild ducks and 7 fish - (3 or 4 of which latter they shot in the shallow rapids of the river & the balance they caught with their hands), and the fish cooked with vinegar flour, salt, & pepper in the baking pot made us a pleasant, relishable, rich & varied evening meal, while the ducks, ready now for the culinary process, we are reserving for tomorrow's dinner. - There seems a probability of change of weather, and greatly is the rain needed - dry soil and stunted grass being the exchange we have made for Durban & Maritzburg green verdure. - It would be nice if we could stay here to-morrow as Mr. Putterill conducts two services in the neat little chapel he put up 3 or 4 years ago, and attending these would be far preferable to spending the Sunday alone. - I called at the Post Office as we passed by, and found to my disappointment that the 2 or 3 letters that were for me had just been posted to Potchefstroom via Cronstad, and that if we had arrived an hour sooner I should have obtained them, in fact we passed the mail cart with four horses abreast (two only harnessed) & horn blowing just as we entered the Town. One of these would be three letters would no doubt be yours, but now

I must have patience for a fortnight till we reach Potchefstroom. — The Maritzburg party passed through this town yesterday morning, and Todd's party only yesterday week, as they were delayed 6 or 7 days by losing their cattle in the innumerable kloofs of Plat Berg, a flat topped mountain that rises above Harrismith. —

5th November. — I don't know where we are, but we think we are some 50 miles from Harrismith, which we left on Monday the 2nd having passed Sunday there and with me it was a pleasant day. The little chapel was full in the morning and as Mr P. was laid up with an attack of dyspepsia, I took his place in the evening & read part of an excellent sermon of Spurgeon's "I am the Rose of Sharon". — We are now in what is called the "Lion veldt", meaning the Lion Country, but these Kingly & troublesome animals have ^{now} become very shy where the road is from the traffic, and we don't anticipate much alarm, though we shall take precautions if we apprehend anything. Oxen have an instinctive fear of the lion, even those which have never seen one repent all their lives on the busy coast, and will rush off miles away in their alarm to their owners' discomfort. We came in sight of game two days, but at too late in the season to see the immense droves about here, as they have passed up northward — above & beyond us though we shall come very possibly into their local ken as they pass. We are much disappointed as we want fresh meat & were anticipating juicy steaks & strengthening stews. — I am writing this in my wagon sitting on my bed, and resting this sheet of paper on the blotting paper pad Aunt Eliza gave me ^{on my knees} — by the way the things you sent to me in the chest per "Ocean Dart" ~~came~~ comes in most opportunely for this expedition: your supply of buttons and

thread holder have just been making themselves very serviceable. - What trouble you took in buying and forwarding Mr Allison's things, and in copying out and making the Aps. Mr & Mrs A. were delighted with every thing & repeated several ^{times} their gratification & how they had trespassed on your kindness. I have just been making out a rough Aps of how we stand, and will make a good copy for this letter. - I hope you received the carte de visite of our Company I enclosed you in my last letter. -

12th November Thursday. - Three days trek (say 45 miles) from Mooi River Dorp otherwise called Potchefstroom. -

We are now in another country having passed through the Free State and entered the Transvaal, which we did on Monday when we crossed the Vaal River.

We have seen immense numbers of wild animals, such an astonishing quantity of game! Very frequently our eyes would rest on thousands of wildebeestes feeding in droves of from ten to a hundred to 2 or 3 hundred, also springboks, bleiboks and quaggas (Burchell's zebra) in great numbers, but we never could shoot any to obtain them, as though we could sometimes get within 3 or 400 yards of them, we never could so effectually strike them as to prevent them running out of sight and possession. Our great obstacle also was the ignorance of the distance owing to the clear deceptive nature of the atmosphere - an animal that was probably 500 yards off or more, we would aim at as 400 only.

We have had two or three conversations with and transactions with Dutchmen & I find the little Dutch I acquired at Zutter's useful now, but I only know a very little. Our commercial transactions have been very profitable - I sold a bamboo whipstick which cost me 1/9 in the Bay for 7/-, taking payment in butter @ 9th flb, beltouque (dried meat in strips) and a pretty fair white ostrich feather @ 2/6: money is never seen or

used here hardly, almost every thing being in barter. We have seen no houses or people since we left Harismit, except two or three of each - quite a wilderness, and for $1\frac{1}{2}$ days the grass was very bad, being eaten off by the game and wanting rain greatly. We neither heard the roar of the lion nor saw its tracks, but it will be rather different 100 miles the other side of Potchefstroom. We have been burning cow dung to cook with since leaving Natal, and have an open sack hanging from the wagon into which we pitch any piece of dried cow's dung that we see as we pass along, but on the other side of Potchefstroom we ^{shall} pass for a long distance through a bush country. Last Sunday morning we had hundreds of game round our wagons & that when we got up, and such curious noises the look outs made as I never heard before - the wildebeestes particularly, who are very inquisitive, and on that occasion were pretty close, knowing perhaps that it was Sunday morning.

13th Nov. We are passing thro' a fine & pleasant country and since ~~we~~ I wrote the foregoing yesterday, we have been admiring the capabilities of the Transvaal, as we have seen the stock & animals of various kinds produced here, its fine grass, and as we have admired its agreeable climate. - There seems every prospect that we shall work very profitably at the destination that is before us, and towards which we have advanced half way, calculating that we are now 400 ^{or 450} ~~or 450~~ miles from Durban, and that consequently we have 400 or 450 miles still to traverse. What we shall seek for will be alluvial diggings, in the first instance, more especially as we have heard that the rivers are sandy. Mr. Baker thinks it very probable from some of the quartz we have seen that we may make £4 a day apiece, which I call very fair wages, and which I am rather doubtful of - but we shall see. By the way if you hear or know of any one coming

out to these Diggings, which I am fully inclined to believe are very rich, direct him by all means to come by way of Natal, and not on any account to Port Elizabeth (which is another name for Algoa Bay). A Port Elizabeth party has just arrived at Potchefstroom which out of 64 oxen has lost 16. There being absolutely no grass at times on the road, and their cattle lay down then exhausted by the wagons. Our oxen are rather foot sore, but we are stopping here (Potchefstroom) 10 days, and then we expect to find our cattle all right again. We have not lost one oxen, and what is more our cattle are not very much poorer than when we left. What a difference. The Algoa Bay merchants have much more capital than the Natal merchants, and of course they are doing all they can to make out their way as the best. The Cape Town route is worst of all. In fact the ~~the~~ best course for those living in the Old Colony is to embark in the steamer for Durban, and come up here thro' Natal as we have done. I have don't say this thro' interested motives, but what I believe to be the perfect truth, both from what I have heard from those who have travelled thro' those parts of the Old Colony I have had to buy water for their cattle at a shilling a bucket, and what I have ^{from} seen myself of the Natal route.

Our journey hitherto has been most pleasant & prosperous, tho' certainly we came up at the best season of the year, and found those mud holes which will try travellers bye & bye (say next month) hard & harmless, as there has been no rain to make them soft for our wagons to stick fast in: these "stick fasts" are horrible things, and as there is no Engineering Board as in Natal to mend the roads, every wagon has to look out ahead and take care of itself. - He had May I copy here what I have written of a letter to Mr. Spearman. I do not know by what name this place is called where we are now spanned now, but Mr. Clement Hill of Pietermaritzburg with the famous Captain Black [he was chief of the first party that started for the Diggings, and called Captain by courtesy,

as his trade is that of a ship's carpenter], whom we have just met, tell us that we are 3 days from Mooi River Dorp. We have got on very fairly so far - our cattle are rather footsore, particularly 2 or 3 of them, but we shall rest them 10 or 14 days at Mooi River Dorp. - We have sustained only 2 or 3 accidents: Joe's fore & channel pin snapped thro' coming sharp down a steep bit of a bank with careless driving, but with an ingenious plug of wood, we soon recovered ourselves: and also one of George's after wheels required its bush tightened, so 3 wedges were driven into the nave, and all was right. - We have seen immense quantities of game, thousands & thousands of wildebeest, and heaps of springboks, blesboks & quaggas (no lions were seen or heard), but we could not obtain a single head of game to our great disappointment; but two were shot but we could not obtain them. Our fare has not been of the best or most varied description, but we have all the more enjoyed anything good & palatable when we got it. We had a famous dinner yesterday, and the remembrance of it will almost serve for to days. Our biscuits have been a staple, and I have eaten more porridge this trip than ever before - it is a famous stay-stomach or stop gap. Then in the way of animal food, wild ducks now & then, and a salt hump or two with a leg of blesbok a Dutchman sold us have constituted our *pièces de résistance*; but the sea biscuit resisted my teeth as much as anything. - We pitch our tent every evening and Ralph sleeps in it every night with the 3 Hapies, the rest of us sleep in the wagons. Ralph gets plenty of chaffing & scrubbing every day, and in time it will take down his pompous conceit; every one has a knock at him, even Mr. Baker [his intended father-in-law], come in inuendoes, others in chaffing, but it will do him great ~~him~~ good, and he will not be so fussy or bragging.

16 November. Monday morning. We hope to be in Potchefstroom to night or tomorrow morning. We spent Sunday here, and had our usual plum pudding (and a very good one it was, Joe's making), which entirely constituted our dinner, but it was of a large size, and there was enough for a

here till next Monday, perhaps more, so will
write more than, as the post leaves for Natal in
an hour or two; therefore excuse my brevity for
the present. I will in my next answer your
letters more fully. The mails leave ^{Durban} now for
England only on the 26th of every month: this
may miss the next steamer, as it will take 10
days or so for this letter to reach Durban.

Before closing let me say - that my mind
is pretty calm & tranquil. My thoughts are more
or less directed to heaven as I think of its holiness
& purity, its peace & beauty, and the glorious
presence of God. Also that if wealth awaits
me from working in the gold fields (which is not
unlikely), I am anxious to have God's grace
to keep me unworldly & uncovetous.

The China Recorder with extracts ^{inside it} from China
Mail &c, and Missionary News, and Aunt
Eliza's packet and your papers all came to
hand this morning. Please With many thanks.
Your Kim paper wrapper was torn. Please
address Maritzburg still, as Mr Ireland
kindly forwards them.

I do not know when you will receive my
next as soon we shall ^{soon} go in. (This is the
expression here for going up country ^{into the interior}.)

God bless you all is the earnest wish of

Your ever affectionate Son,
A. Stephen Hobson.

No 89,

7 miles from Potchefstroom,
South African Republic,

23

26th November 1868.

Rec^d - Feb. 8. 1869

My dear Father, 26th Nov. We left Potchef-

stroom yesterday afternoon, and trekked out here where we slept. Our cattle are much improved in condition by our 8 days rest at Potchefstroom, and now seem quite fitted for the 30 days travelling before us. We now are a large company, as we trek in company with the Durban party, which consists of 10 men & a boy, as they have secured the services of a guide who has before gone in to the country before us: he is an American Black called Tom Fleming and has a certificate from Glasgow as master of a ship. He took up in his wagon the first party that went to the diggings, viz: that of Capt. Black's. We have thought it advisable therefore to go with such a guide as the ^{country is} known to all of us, and being not so much traversed, we think it very likely with the various hunter's paths that otherwise we should take a wrong road. There are now 4 wagons in company - our two comfortable tent wagons, the Durban Company's buck wagon and Fleming's buck wagon; also a small spring cart belonging to two hard working young fellows from the lower Hugenin. Fleming also has with him a white driver, and a young Black fellow - a Kottentot I think, who goes as a hunter; he is willing to take the skins of all what he shoots for his wages. In his last service he shot 8 elephants, and only came out a day or two before Fleming engaged him. In number counting

every head (beef as well) we amount to 26. —

Saturday night 28th Nov: — We are now outspanned for the night and also for tomorrow. We have just passed through rather a narrow defile, where I hope to pass some pleasant hours in quiet tomorrow. There is a Dutch house about 3 or 400 yards from us, but and we shall probably outspan nearly it. —

1st December. For the last two days we have been skirting the Magaliesberg range, and much here we enjoyed the scenery and admired the country which needs only population to develop it: at present a house is a rarity, but nothing so uninhabited as that part of the Free State we passed thro' where I believe we were a week or 10 days without seeing a house, ~~or a human being~~. Today we have been passing thro' a bushy country consisting almost entirely of mimosaes — as also a part of yesterday, with the Magaliesberg heights rising above us as we trekked along at their feet. The Durban party procured this morning from an ~~English~~ English farmer named Robinson 2 large sacks of wheat for 16 yards of fruit and 4 ells of molleskin: we also procured a bundle of onions for a ^{pint} of sugar, and also a bucket full of nice buttermilk for which we gave some sugar. I hear that at Rustenburg sugar is selling for 10/- a lb in notes. I shall try to sell some of mine and will be quite content to get 5/- a lb in notes: but I think it is too strange to be true. — I wish we could obtain some buckmeat as we have had no fresh meat excepting twice when we had some wild duck & twice fish since leaving Maritzburg: I bought a little at

Potchefstroom the last day we were there for 3^d only as the state of our finances prevented us spending more. Tomorrow night is the last time that we can let our oxen run all the night as for 2 nights we must tie them up and after always make kraals for them unless we come upon one made before, as the lions soon become abundant; also a night watch of two will have to be kept. —

When I was in Potchefstroom, I received the day we left your letter of 25th September acknowledging mine wherein I told you of mine intention of starting for the gold fields — also my Mother's of same date. It was quite a pleasure to receive two letters from Potchefstroom, and the second quite a surprise.

I said in my last letter (which will very likely arrive with this as I fear it would miss the steamer at Durban) that it would be best for you to direct ^{your} letters to Maritzburg as before, but a regular post is now opened straight through to the Diggings and I don't want to impose any more on Mr. Ireland's kindness.

Rustenburg 2nd December. We arrived about 20 minutes ^{walk} off the road last night, and now I am going in to the Town to post this short letter.

I remain your affectionate Son,
A. S. Hobson.

Gold Fields } is my
S. G. Republic } address
South Africa }

We have been quite surprised at the goodness of
the roads so far - certainly the fine weather is all
in our favor, there being no or few bad places to
stick fast in, though of course the roads are at
times rough with stones which make the wagons
jolt a great deal. When riding is not pleasant.
Tomorrow I think ^{it is that} we shall come to where
water is scarce, and when we shall have to
trek perhaps a day or half without water, but
we shall see - it may not be so

No 90.

24/1
Posted at Macheu's Town, Ramangato,
22nd December 1868.

Rec^d. April 8th.

My dear Mother

Monday Evening 14th Dec: - I greatly
wish you could see me and my surroundings just
now. It is about 8¹/₂ o'clock, quite dark - our four wagons
are so drawn up as to form 2 sides of a square, the
other two sides being formed of large branches of
thorn (= *Mimosa* tree), and into this high well fenced
square we enclosed our cattle about 75 in number -
for we are in the lion country, whom we heard for
the first time 4 days ago about 3 in the morning, and
today 3 men of the Durban Coy accidentally came
upon two lions whilst hunting. We make large fires
at night of course, and of wood we have plenty as for
the last week or 10 days we have hardly ever been out
of the bush. We arrived ^{on} Saturday afternoon (12th)
on the right bank of the Marico River which you will
see in the Map I sent you, to be one of the left hand
tributaries of the Crocodile or Limpopo River, so that
now we are only a little more than a fortnight
from our journey's end. We spent Sunday there
Mr Bottomley conducting the service as usual in
the morning very nicely, and in the evening there was a
prayer meeting in our tent, both of which I enjoyed.

We left that encampment this morning after crossing
the Marico River without any mishap ^{or} much trouble,
though both banks are as steep as a roof, especially
the right bank. The country we have been passing
through lately is exceedingly fertile, the soil especially
near the Crocodile River being wonderfully rich. - The
last 3 days we have been revelling in fresh meat,
having come into a part where game is plentiful

and two Roan Bucks have fallen to the guns of our party, which are now all eaten up, and tomorrow we are greatly hoping to have another. We had a splendid dinner yesterday (Sunday) - I'll tell you what it was. 1st A large leg of buck roasted in the baking pot with slices of bacon stuck into the flesh to remove the dryness of the meat, a few roasted potatoes, and a saucepan half full of boiled dried beans - 2nd a large boiled plum pudding with plenty of raisins in it, nutmeg but no fat or eggs - last Sunday we had eggs - of this there was plenty for supper 3rd our usual kettleful of tea; now if that was not a feed, I should like to see what is. I know I eat till I felt uncomfortably full, and if this seems vulgar or savagelike, let me say that if people had had such poor fare as we have been limited to, they would also eat when they came across some meat. In the afternoon a Kafir found a bee's nest, but no honey only young bees & bee bread; of this I eat half a comb, and soon after another Kafir brought some young bees, and I had another taste. At Tea or supper we had some of the cold buckmeat & finished up the plum pudding & another kettle of tea. - But the time to drink is when you have been hunting, and you come up to the wagons which have been travelling on at the same time, and your mouth is so dry that you can't spit. It is hot here just. But it is rather dangerous hunting about here alone, whether you start so or get detached in the heat of the chase from your companions; I say this as 3 or 4 of the Durban Coy were surrounded this afternoon by about 20 wild dogs, which would not leave them till I had been shot dead & two wounded. Mr. Baker & Joe Speermain are the two of our party who go out hunting the most frequently, whilst I stop at home the most. I like the work best of clearing & opening the road by cutting down trees, and helping to make the cattle kraal for the night.

There are 6 wagons just ahead of us - namely 2 from Teyateyan (Zod's party), 2 from Maritzburg, and 2 from the Cape report.

24/1
2 from Queenston / Old Colony, all bound ^{Augusto,}
for the Gold Diggings. - I must now turn
in. The night is as dark as a wolf's mouth, and
I expect we shall have some rain about 3
or 4 tomorrow morning. We have just had prayers
in the tent - my bible is misplaced and Ralph Lawrence
has lost his little testament, so I repeated with help
the 23rd Ps. praying also afterwards: - we always
remember our absent friends.

Wed Thursday night - 17/12. - It is now so hot in the
middle of the day, that I feel quite disinclined to write ^{these}
and now after a good supper of a savory buck stew I will
try to tell you a little more about my journey. We have
to-day known the misery of bad water: when we outspanned
for breakfast this morning, our guide (Tom Fleming) was
perfectly surprised to find the large pool he expected to
see, to which he or some of his former party had sworn in, only
liquid mud: this perhaps is too strong an expression - well then,
only very muddy water. To make this cookable, we filtered
it thro' a towel with sand, and also mixed up with it pow-
dered alum (as we used to do at Shanghai), but our coffee was
not very palatable. Tasted rather tart with its chemical operation.
As we learnt that only brackish water was to be obtained
at the next outspan, we filtered some more & filled up a 5-
gallon can we have with the nasty stuff: sorry look-out
this, but fortunately we have plenty of fresh meat as some
of our party shot a quagga this morning & we had some
roo buck meat from yesterday. Well we inspanned rather
gloomily, but we had not proceeded more than an hour & a
half when we came upon some small pools from 3 to 6 yards
in circumference of good fresh water by the road side, at
which of course we outspanned immediately, and didn't
the oxen rush into the water, poor brutes; and didn't we fill up
our cans, buckets & kettles, throwing the miserable slate coloured
mixture away. So thus have we been delivered out of this
trouble.

We have now been in the Bush 7 days, and the country
we have gone over during that time has been wonderfully
flat; whenever you mount a little eminence (which is
rare) your eyes see the Bush stretching away perfectly

and level as far as the eye can reach - in fact just
like the sea. The trees consist mostly of *Thorn*
die (*Meimosa*) of half a dozen ^{ranging only from 10 to 20 ft high} varieties - namely the
"stay-a-bit", the hook & other varieties *Fluids*, but no
timber trees, only those suitable for burning & fencing. -

I have got quite tired of flesh eating, and don't feel
quite the thing from so doing. I had such a longing for
some vegetable food this afternoon that as soon as we
were outspanned I rushed out of the wagon with a
saucepan, made a fire & soon had a potful of beauti-
ful dry rice cooked, when I eat 2 or 3 whacks, and
felt considerably relieved, as I had a curious pain at
the bottom of my chest. What a good thing it was we
had nice water. -

We expect to reach Ramangwato in 4 weeks or
2 days, say Saturday night: we shall not be nearer
however than 70 miles from the Town where 10,000 Natives
live under a sub chief called Matchew, Mt-Macken-
zie of the L. M. S., and 30 white people who are traders.
I think of disposing some of my sugar here, and getting
guns & ammunition in its stead, which again I shall
change away for ivory & feathers: now don't be alarmed
about the idea of my selling guns to Kafirs, for they are
never used in war but only for shooting elephants. I can
get for a musket that costs me £3.15/- or £4 either 2
bullocks or a tusk weighing about 40 lbs - as I am told:
the bullocks are worth £4 & 5 each and the ivory 4/- a lb in
Mauritzburg. It was quite untrue that sugar was fetching
1/- a lb in notes at Rustenburg, but I am creditably
informed that I can get £3 to 4 a cwt at Ramangwato.
Now Fleming says he sold some on his last trip at £4.5/-

Every one is asleep around me, as I will close. We
have not heard or been troubled with the lion yet, except
hearing the one last week. Some of us are out hunting today
saw about 20 camels (= cameleopards, from the Dutch word
Kameel), but now we are going out of the game, tho'
abundance of which we have been passing. Rhinoceros
(= rhinoceros) spots have been seen today.

Friday night 18/2. - I have been thinking that after all I
had better not have anything to do with gun selling as

it is a violation of the Republic's laws, and I suppose this ^{part} is claimed by the Transvaal people as their territory. I shall ask the advice of Mr Mackenzie the missionary, or his representative. -

Our plan of travelling afoot in the lion country is as follows - to let the cattle out of the kraal or fold at daybreak that they may feed, then we cook and drink coffee with perhaps a drinker (piece of sea biscuit) or two; at sunrise we inspan and trek for 3 or 3½ hours and thus pass over 7 to 9 miles, breakfast follows (the other morning we did not break our fast till 11 o'clock) and a long rest to 2 P.M. when we inspan and trek for 3 or 4 hours or so more, which completes our 15 or 16 miles for the ^{day} ~~trek~~ - all hands, black & white, then set to, chopping down branches & dragging ² them to the wagons where the kraal is made; at this time we are ready for our second meal, quite ready, say rice & buck cutlets. When tired we retire to the tent to read the blessed scriptures & pray, and then to bed: Ralph is the only one that sleeps in the tent, the rest of us in the wagons. It is so pleasant sitting round the camp fires chatting or singing sometimes. Our journey hitherto has been one of little hardship or roughing; we have always had plenty to eat, tho' it may have been poor food, and we have never gone to bed hungry or thirsty. As for weather we have had it so fine that we have been stopped only one day (the 3rd of this month), and for have no complaints to make of bad roads, tho' they are self made mostly. -

I am writing this whilst sitting on my bed in the wagon with the candle in the lantern: just now on lifting up my eyes I caught sight of a small scorpion walking over the sheet I have just finished and which was lying loose on my blankets; smushing him will account for the mark there made. No more to night.

22nd Dec: I am now closing this letter at Macheu's Town, Ramangato, in the house of

Messrs Gordon & Kaper, Traders. We have been here now 3 days, viz: Sunday, Monday & today - tomorrow we start again. We are not incamped in the Town, but 10 miles (full) out of it, where we are very quiet, but ^{not} with the best of grass tho' plenty of water. We i.e. McNeil, Bottomley & myself, walked into Town on Sunday to see Mr Mackenzie the Missionary, but to our disappointment (tho' we somewhat expected it), we found that he had left for England. We were very hot and tired, when we rested in a little house close by Mr Mc's, where two navvies just returned from the diggings, were staying. They had gone in Percival Pink's party, and gave us a very gloomy account of the gold, but their want of success arose from ignorance of the manner of working and not giving sufficient time. Pink is in Town now, and we have seen him. This is a very large Kafir Town, holding it is said 50,000 inhabitants, many of whom however are absent always, either elephant shooting or attending cattle at the outposts; but it is a. — The Traders here quite laugh at the gold; calling it a hoax, and say that tho' there is certainly ^{gold} in the quartz (but not in the alluvial) it will not pay to crush. Of course so many coming here will affect their trade prejudicially, and they therefore speak from their side of the case. — We paid our license money yesterday (£5) to Kama (Sekomo's eldest

low) as Kachem was busy rain making.
 Mr. Baker describes him as possessing some
 bad attributes of every creature from man
 to that animal which wallows in the mud.
 I have just seen him this morning, offering
 him a bag of sugar for sale but he hardly
 noticed me, and said something about some
 corn in exchange, treating me in an insult-
 ing manner. This morning I sold two bags
 of sugar to Gordon at £4 4 cwt or £5 a
 bag for a ~~large~~ splendid large tiger Kaross
 (4 skins, real tiger), two rhinoceros horns,
 and 2 lbs black feathers (ostrich), good ones.
 The Kaross was £7, the horns weighed 17
 lbs @ 3/- flb, and the feathers cost 18/- flb.
 I sold the trader (Gordon) also two pairs
 of white trousers @ 12/- per pair.

I am in great haste as the oxen are
 waiting to be dispatched, and the sun
 is getting low.

My warm love to all.

Your ever affectionate son,
 R. S. Hobson.

MS. 5856 25/1
No 91. River Lake, 1st February 1869.

Rec^d. May 8th

My dear Father,

January 1st 1869. Shashe

River. — Tomorrow we shall arrive (D.V.) at our destination, viz: the Lake River, which is the site of the present Gold Diggings, and now distant from us only 3 or 4 hours trekking. —

I wrote home last from Shoshong, the chief town of the Bamangwato nation, where reaching the chief lives: well, we left our outspanning place (10 miles from the town, and where we had rested 4 days) on the 23rd of Dec: and since then (9 days) we have passed through the driest, most waterless country I have ever seen, in fact far the hardest portion of our journey. — I have never prized water so much, and never before been so thirsty. It was such a sad sight to see our poor bullocks on one or two occasions (fortunately not oftener) bellow for water when we outspanned them, which we did because the next watering place was too distant to trek on to; and also to see them rush into the water when they did arrive at it. Oh it is a precious liquid! But we ourselves have never suffered for the want of it, because we generally took the precaution to fill up our cans, Kettles & Buckets. It has been such a strange sight to see the various rivers we came to — some of them 100 yards wide — only dry coarse sand with a small pool here and there.

Seriba

One fine river we crossed called the Maklouchie ~~for something like it~~ had not a single drop of water in it, for we wandered up & down the dry bed and in parties of 3's and 4's sinking but in rain as in 4 feet we would come to the hard rock with the sand only moist: fortunately the Maklouchie (or some name like it) was only 2 miles ahead, so we made our way there, and 3 or 4 pools were found. We have arrived here at the worst time of the year as the heavy rains pour down & believe during this month upon which we have today entered. — We are now in the land of wild animals, the spoor (= foot print) of elinoceros (or rhinoceros as they are called here) camels (= cameleopards or giraffes), buffaloes which are twice as large as the American bison, and various kinds of bucks being found constantly. Ralph Clarence went out hunting yesterday with a Kafir and came upon a rhinoceros, which they so shot in the head as to make him roll about on the ground & throw up clouds of dust, but they were afraid of his charging at them, so they ran up a tree instead of loading again & giving him another ball each. He gradually picked himself up and tho' they followed as his spoor & blood, they returned to the wagons which were about 6 miles distant. What a load of meat we should have had — half a wagon-full. Another man, Mr. Bottomley of the Durban Compy shot at a rhinoceros also but his bullet glanced off as from a target. One of his mates shot a live Koodoo, which is larger than a donkey, the evening before, and several of us went to fetch the meat, but they had to drive a lion off whom they found feasting on him when they came up.

12th January. Novelikatsé's Country.

We arrived on the 2nd of the day after writing the foregoing, namely on the 2nd January. Great surprise and I may add some disappointment was felt when we had made our inspection, for the fact appears that though quartz abounds, gold is scarce. I was the first to descend Black's hole which is 46 feet deep. We went up a small hill (eminence rather), which took only 3 to 5 minutes to ascend, and there ^{on the top} was the shaft around the mouth of which were heaps of the excavated quartz, at which several of us were smashing with a hammer or strong stone, finding a speck or two of gold but rarely. Our mineralogist (Mr. Baker) describes the quartz in that region, namely the Tate, as a hungry compact description, and therefore not encouraging. The hill or rise in which is Black's shaft is covered with small pieces of white quartz, and small shrubby trees and bushes. I saw very little in the hole or shaft, down which I was lowered by our lines. I noticed two seams of quartz one 9 and the other 5 inches thick perhaps, the rest of the sides of the shaft being composed of a kind of slate, but which is not slate, Mr. Baker says, being much too hard & too heavy, but a sort of hornblende mixed with some other foreign substances. The statement that Black's party were lazy is now proved to be false. Most of us are disappointed (especially the Queenstown party, who almost expected to pick up the gold ready dug at their feet), and strong feelings are expressed towards March, the German discoverer, whose

statements ^{led} us and others up here. - As for our party, we have nearly come to the determination to leave the Tote soon, and make for a place called Musina in the Map (look on the South bank of the Limpopo and North of Zoutspanburg) where I have told my mates of the old native gold workings that my late scholars informed me about thro' Mr Allison, and which I think I have mentioned to you in my previous letters. Musina is distant 8 days from our camp on the Tote, but only 3 of these ~~can~~ we travel in with our wagons, as the fly (toctoe) prevent our oxen from going farther. ^{the other 5 days must be up of course.} So you see what we think of the gold diggings on the Tote: of course we shall not move camp till we have made some prospectings round about. -

Now for a few words of explanation about my being in this far off celebrated land. Simply, one of our wagons has come up here, which is 4 or 5 days back from the Tote, to buy corn as George and Joe Spearman's stock of food for their Kafirs was getting low. This is a much pleasanter country than the one we have left: the landscape is most pleasing, presenting a more varied aspect than the flat level land we have been passing thro' for the last 3 or 4 weeks. The atmosphere is more bracing and elastic for we are at a much higher altitude than the Tote, the streams that we have passed between that & this running with it into the Limpopo. We are now on a ridge - behind us is the basin of the Limpopo, before us the basin of the Zambezi. And now for the first time for many weeks we have had rain from 2 or 3 thunder showers, which has been quite refreshing. The green grass that we met with 2 or 3 days ago has quite pleased us, particularly at a place where John Lee - who is the Agent for

25/2

this government to some extent - is temporarily staying
and where we spent last Sunday; such a pleasant
spot, where more water than we had seen for some
time was lying supplying us also with a fine bathing
~~spot~~ place, and the grass rich green long and
plentiful - didn't the cattle fill themselves. - The
country we are in just now has bush but far more
scattered and park like, and innumerable
mounds & hills of a mountainous formation (granite
but no quartz or gold) rise suddenly out of the earth
and diversify the landscape. - Yesterday was
such an exciting day as our two wagons (the
second one being the Durban Coy's) were surrounded
by shouting noisy Makalakas (a subdued race)
selling us Kafir corn. The process is a tedious
one as the corn is all sold in very small baskets
holding perhaps 2 or 3 quarts, for which we give 2
strings of beads or so apiece, and in this ~~small~~ slow
course are our sacks filled up: the same way with
beans & ground nuts - mealies are very uncommon.
George & I sat in the end of the wagon, and as each
basket was presented, he would call out to me
2 strings or 3 strings (according to the size of the
basket), and I would separate the same from a
large bunch of beads; if the seller expressed dis-
satisfaction a pinch or two of loose ones was given
him or her, and the grain handed over to our Kafir
who poured it into the sack outside. The beads
most sold are white, but blue (of which we have
not any) are the favorite; black we also sold but
they are not much liked. Mr McNeil (of the
Durban party) bought his mostly with green.

29th January. We have at last returned to the
Lake, and are now preparing to return again as
to our great surprise we have had an invitation
or rather more correctly, permission given us to enter
the country, to visit the Acting King (as Moselakatsi
is dead), and to hunt there also, as well as leave

to dig on the Tote as long as we like. Manyama is about 80 miles or 4½ days trek from here, and the big Braal where the Acting King lives 2½ days beyond that again, so we have not much to prolong our journey with. — Fourteen men have arrived ^{at the Tote from Natal} during our absence, and they are ~~returning~~ bending their steps home again — 10 of these are navvies, and 2 of the remaining four have come from the Australian Colonies to these gold fields purposely — so that will give you an idea of the state of things here. The Luccastown party of 13 men ^{are} leaving tomorrow, and that from Alice ~~in~~ 2 or 3 days after. — But we are not at all sanguine of doing much in the interior of the Matibili Country (where we are now going) for the people there are excessively suspicious fearing that everyone desires their country to take it from them and possess it. We know we shall not be allowed to dig, and to prevent us two guards or spies will accompany us, which is the course adopted with every trader's & hunter's wagon, and we may expect may be done to us.

31st January. — We are starting early tomorrow morning for Manyama, and want to get pretty near the Ramakwabe river at the end of the day, so tho' it is Sunday evening I must finish this letter now. — My thoughts just now have been that this kind of life is not favorable to the inner life — it tends to separate me from God, and to forget His love, and anything of this nature must therefore necessarily ^{deprive me} of happiness and peace. On looking back I find I have been very unworthy and careless, but on one hand I have learnt some lessons — that the Christian life is a life

of conflict and that it requires much faith and prayer for grace to overcome at last. My pride and self love have never so apparent to me before, indeed so plain as to discourage me, for it has seemed impossible for me to overcome them. From a few remarks made the other Sunday evening by Mr Todd (capt. of the Terulau party) I said how righteousness exalts a private individual as well as a nation, but the influence of others and worldly things is great in leading one astray. The words are then sweet - "He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake," - Two spiritual wants have been before my mind lately: a spirit of prayer and supplication, for to possess a prayerful spirit leads one to seek frequently & earnestly the presence of God; and a susceptible heart, mindful of the love of Christ, melting and tender at the remembrance of His love & pity, which will make all sin & impurity distasteful & displeasing. The impression on my heart is very feeble at present of the shed blood and broken body of the Saviour, and I look back at the days at the Kar Kloof when my feelings were moved to tears on two occasions there at the thoughts of Christ's love and goodness. - My sympathy and sorrow goes out to those who are ignorant of Christ's love and His great salvation - the joy they deprive themselves of (I refer here to my countrymen) by resisting the offers of His pardon.

X I have not received any letters from you since leaving Potchefstroom; ^{indeed} as the two Natal companies who arrived here during my absence in Moselkatsie's country did not bring me any letters at all. I hope you are all well and happy. ~~My~~ ^{My} sister and Brother John happy - I mean spiritually; in Christ?

How is Robert? Send him my brotherly love, and the wish that tho' he may find temptations hard to resist and overcome, he may not be discouraged but may experience the example & love of Christ stimulating and comforting him. - I thank you again for the many presents you sent out to me in my camp or wood chest: I have reproached myself for neglecting to refer to many of the things in it. The bright many colored ribbon is by me now - it is too good to wear in the bush. -

I have now obtained in trading 5 cow tusks of ivory and therefore small, weighing in all 28 lbs which cost me 4/6 & 6d: 5 rhinoceros horns weighing about 47 lbs worth a little under 3/- & 6d: 14 lbs of black ostrich feathers (very fair ones) - short of course - worth among Natal Kaffirs a pound a pound: a tiger skin Kaross worth in Natal £10, and a bush cat Kaross about £4 or 5, and two or three other little things. Oh one thing more - a missionary draft for £2.15/- drawn by Rev^d Thomas Thomas on Rev^d - Thompson of Capetown Agent for the London Miss^y Soc^y, which I had rather have than any Bank ~~note~~ draft. I have just given it to George Spearman to remit to his wife.

We shall wait at the Ramakwibaw till the Durban party overtake us: there are plenty of camels and rhinoceros between here & there 20 miles distant, not to speak of quaggas, hartebeestes and "such small deer." We ~~small~~ ^{saw} a troop of 17 camels just the other side of the Ramakwibaw as we were coming here; we fired 3 or 4 shots but did not kill any.

With my love to you all I remain Your ever affectionate Son, Stephen Hobson.

I think I owe Aunt Eliza a letter; please let her know all about me. I have written to Mr Allison, and also to Mr Ireland, to whom I enclose this.

No. 92. Mt. Thomas' Mission Station, called
 Engatini or Inyati,
 Rec. Aug. 7th Thursday Aft: 4th March '69.

Father,
 My dear ~~Mr~~ ~~husband~~

I have just a few minutes only to write 2 or 3 lines, as Messrs Westbeach & Mauch & Phillips (the first & last traders) are leaving for Potchefstroom. We have just arrived here, and Mr. Baker and I have had a few minutes conversation with Mauch who seems to us a genuine man. He has told us where to find gold some 7 to 8 days from here mentioning the Benibisi and Sepakoe and I Umfale Rivers, ~~and~~ many parts of which however have fly, and therefore impassable for bullocks. We are strictly watched and may expect even more espionage from what Mauch says; who recommends strongly not to mention a word about digging but go as hunters, and that we must manage to get lost now & then. Mauch says that Brodrick's ~~map~~ pamphlet called "Ophe's Direct" is incorrect having many inaccuracies, and the gold fields are colored in the wrong place. — We are very vexed not being able to see more of Mauch, and the traders but the last 2 days but travelling has been very slow from heavy rains making the

roads frightful to travel over and we have
had to put two spans on several times to
each other wagons - that is the Durban
party and mine for you must know that
our Company has dissolved, Ralph Clarence
returned from the State, & George & Jor Spearman
from Manyama's where I bought George's
wagon & oxen, Mr Baker coming on with me
to see the Northern gold fields and to give
a true report on them if possible as well as
(now) to substantiate Mr March's statement.

No more at present
from your affectionate son,
Stephen Hobson.

I am in pretty fair health, thinner
than I was from roughing, but no fever
yet thank God.

No 92.

Inyati, Mr Thomas Station

27/1

Lat: S. 19.2 } I think
Long: E. 29.5 }

8th March 1869.

Rec. Aug. 7th

My dear Father,

7th March. - We arrived

at the above place 2 days ago (on Friday the 5th) and here it seems likely we shall have to remain a month as the latter rains now falling cause the country before us to be very unhealthy & fever-breeding. - Our Company was dissolved suddenly at my suggestion the very day we left Manyama's Outpost to come in here, as we were at odds and our opinions totally different about the gold & our enterprise in connection with it, so I bought George Spearman's wagon & oxen for £65 & £66 respectively, agreeing to pay him also £27.10/- to liquidate any claim with respect to my last instalment of £75, which total sum of £158.10/- I gave him an order or bill 4 months after sight on Mr Ireland, who I think not unlikely may possess some £120 of mine from the sale of my 150 Acres near Verulam as I instructed a Durban man (Mr Chas. North) to sell it - in fact he almost begged me to give him the commission as he said he could get £130 for it. If I think Mr Ireland will not be in funds, I shall go down to Natal myself, selling the wagon to an elephant hunter (Mr Biles) who lives at John Lee's close to Manyama's: Mr B. much wants the wagon and offered George Spearman his old one and a handsome profit on mine to exchange; so that the old wagon could carry me down to Natal. - George and Joe Spearman left for Natal there via Bamangwato

and Potchefstroom the same day (22nd Feb^y) that I left for the Northern Goldfields, separating mutually at Manyame's Outpost. Mr. Baker accompanied me, as I offered him a passage in my wagon being wishful to obtain his report on what lies before us on the so-called Northern Goldfields. The Company divided the stores before we started, the spearmans giving us by far the largest half, and these with our crusher & mining appliances and my goods make a heavy load - at least 4,000 lbs.

I say we arrived ^{here} on the 4th, which from the 22nd - ~~alt~~ is slow work, but my Kafir driver (Old Oles) is worth very little and the only one procurable; my Kafir leader had never done his work before; neither Mr. Baker & I knew anything about driving, so that we soon stuck fast a whole day (the 23rd Feb^y) at a place that with other ~~Geo~~: or Joe ~~the~~ cattle would have run up, and it took us 2 days to overtake the Durban party who had only preceded us 6 hours.

I again stuck fast in a small river and the Durban party kindly hooked on their span of bullocks & pulled me out in ~~instanter~~ for mine cared not the slightest for Old Oles, ~~for~~ who for detecting and finding rhinoceros, or elephant spoor I should say was unsurpassed. - Three days before we arrived here a day of heavy rain came on, and the road became so heavy that we were all that time doing 3 hours work in dry weather. The fore wheels ~~to~~ were soon solid with compact mud, the wagons sinking up to the fore axles, and we had to pull each other wagons with two spans, first drawing one and then going ~~on~~ back for the other, one of which occasions my trek-tow (the long rope or chain attached to the pole of the wagon) snapped in two like a thread. These 12 days from Manyame's to the

place, I shall soon forget, for I have never been so anxious & agitated in my life before, constantly apprehending some accident, so much that some of the Durbanites noticed the care-worn expression of my countenance: however I could always eat & sleep, and now I am quite enjoying the cessation of trouble & my present rest, though I am pretty busy in making things snug & bright.

We anticipated seeing Mr or Herr March (the German discoverer whose representations brought us & many others up here), but to our vexation he was on the point of going out for Potchefstroom with Messrs Westbeach & Phillips. ^{proceeding} Mr Baker and I saw him and had half an hour's conversation in his ^{or Mr W's} wagon when he showed us his map & told us some of the places where gold is abundant, distant from here about 8 days with a wagon. We both believe him to be a genuine man and have confidence in him. A day's communication ^{with him} would have been invaluable: there is something mysterious & Providential in this - it is so strange that after waiting here for weeks, his departure should take place on the day we arrive. -

Mr Thomas Thomas - the missionary - has made himself very kind to us, and his suggestions of great worth, particularly to the Durban Coy, for as for myself being a trader, I expect not the slightest difficulty in making an entrance and dissipating suspicion from the minds of the ruling men. We don't expect any of us being able to dig at present, but we want to prospect & I dare that to the course of future events, consequently the Durban party go in as elephant hunters.

Mr Thomas is slowly recovering from the fever which has left him weakened in body & mind: his wife is in a most dangerous position, so low that no food can pass her palate and lying in a dozing

half unconscious state, so that I should not be surprised at her dying. His house is in a low place, and his family's sickness (for 2 of the children have been down too) has been brought on by the floors being inundated with water.

This is Sunday evening, but Mr Bottomley of the Durban party is going down to the Tafe (or 8 days good trekking from here) in Mr Thomas' wagon to buy stores from any returning diggers as Mr T's stock is reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ a bag of meal, and he leaves to-morrow morning, to which time I have left the writing of my business letters. -

I expect you will be remembering this day more than I am as my birthday, but I have a dislike to special occasions, and cannot usually bring my mind to particularly recognize any set time. I forgot to express my good wishes to you in my letter No 91 announcing my arrival at the Tafe, but something distracted me just at the time, so you must not think I forgot your birthday on the 2nd January, which was the day we arrived at the Tafe.

I am now I suppose at least 1200 miles from Maritzburg in the heart of the greatest & most populous nation in South Africa, and only 8 days distant in a wagon from the Northern gold fields, where Mauch has pretty well prospected. But we must wait till the sickly season is past, as otherwise we might be prostrated & lose our lives thro' fever. Two traders, who have been in the country before (and both have had the fever) are waiting here also. -

The Southern or Tafe goldfields, and the so-called Central goldfields I don't think contain any paying gold, but I have confidence in those just before us. The worst of it is that most of the parts before us are infested with the fly (or tsetse), which makes ox and horse travelling impossible. It would have been

better in my opinion if the London & Limpopo Coy had deposited their traction engine (or steam rhinoster as we here term it, rhinoster being the Dutch word for rhinoceros & mostly used in these parts) on the southern bank of the Zambesi, which is only 7 days walk from where we are now, Mr Thomas having walked it himself; and the steam rhinoster would not only be unaffected by the fly, but produce a powerful impression on the Matabele.

Time makes me close, and a fatiguing position to write in also, as 3 other letters have made me, so with love to all I remain

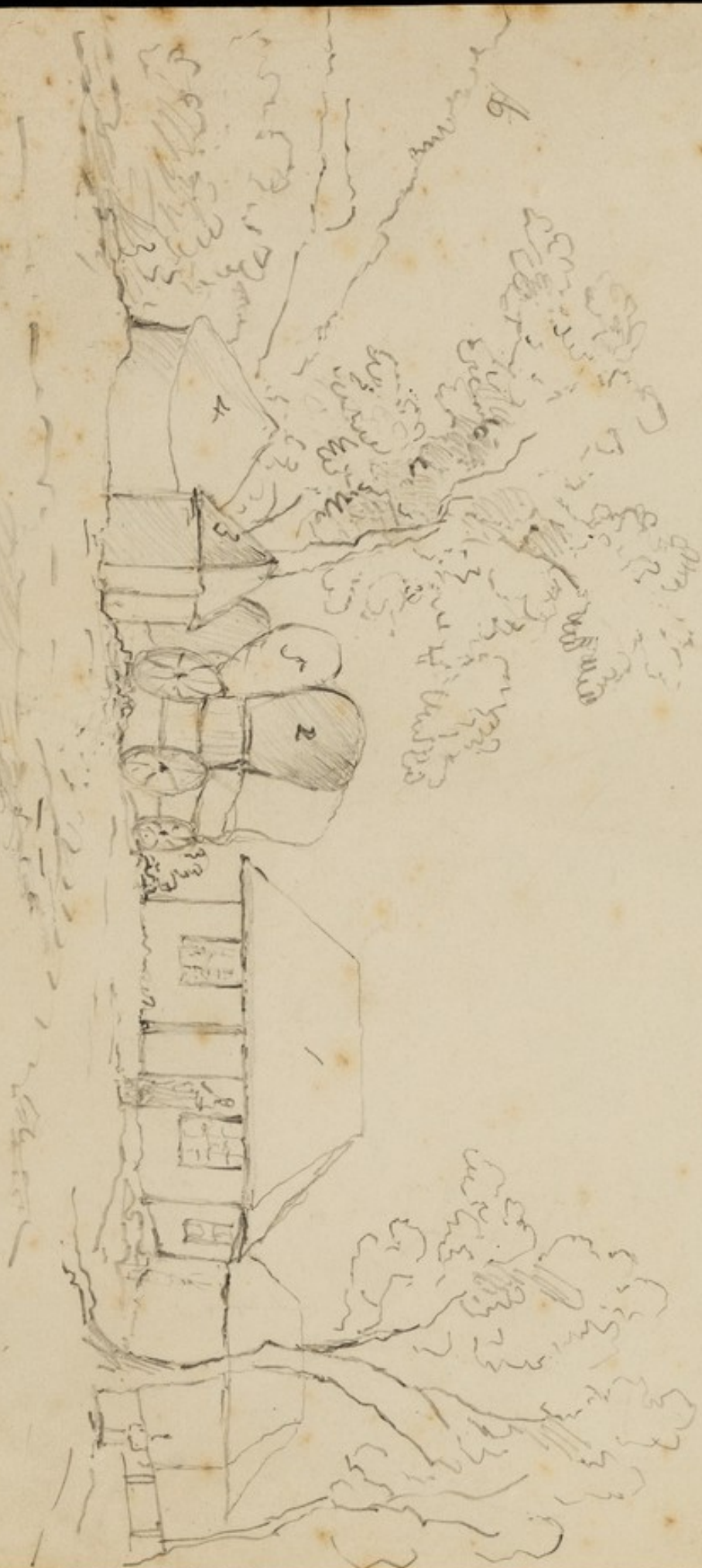
Your ever affectionate Son,
B. S. Hobson.

I have no idea how long we shall be in here - perhaps 3 months: the Durban party will now wait over the winter I expect. The weather today is splendid, rather hot, but a cool refreshing breeze comes blowing up now & then, so that one can hardly imagine that this is now the fever season. By the way, quinine dissolved in brandy is the prescription: Mr Baker & I have nearly an ounce bottle of quinine, but not too much brandy. - A party of Griquas (a tribe of Kottentots) are outspanned by us, who went in 18 strong elephant shooting a short time since: they lost one man a few days ago, and another died from fever also the very day we arrived here. - As I said before we do not in the slightest expect to be able to dig, as the Matabele are too suspicious & superstitious to allow us to do that, but we go in prospecting, to judge for ourselves, and to support Mauch's statements if they be the truth. I am wishful to get Mr Baker's report as I have full confidence in his (The wind blowing about my paper accounts for the blots).

capability and honor. I don't charge him anything. I have writtew this letter on a strain or pressure of time, therefore that must account for the omission of all Christian words, but I may say that during the last 2 weeks I have much enjoyed reading the Scriptures and prayer, finding them solacing in the extreme.

Mr Bottomley is buying a few stores for me also at the Sale which he will bring up in Mr Thomas' wagon - 1 bag of Meal 5 lbs Tea 5 lbs Coffee 10 lbs Powder, 20 or 30 lbs Beads, 1 piece Salempore, Sail needles & twine, Awls &c. I have sold Mr Thomas £9 worth of Sugar (two bags) for which he gave me a draft.

Myate. Notable boundary



- 1 Cottage
- 2 Wagon
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Hut
- 5 Tent
- 6 Hill